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THE INDIAN LITERATURES

No. XII

SANSKRIT LITERATURE

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1951

Printed by Ramanlal J. Patel at Sadhana Press, Raopura,
Baroda (India) and published for the P.E.N. All-India Centre
by the International Book House, Ltd., Bombay.

THE P. E. N. BOOKS

The Indian Literatures—No. XII

Edited by Sophia Wadia

for

The P. E. N. All-India Centre

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SANSKRIT LITERATURE

By

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN, M.A., B.L.,

and

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Published for

The P.E.N. All-India Centre,

Aryasangha, Malabar Hill, Bombay 6,

by

The International Book House, Ltd.,

Ash Lane, Fort, Bombay 1.

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Since the last book in this Series was published seven years have gone by.* It has been an eventful septenary cycle, both in the World and in India. Confining ourselves to the latter only, the major event which marked a new era in our Country's ever-lengthening annals, was the attainment of her political freedom in the summer of 1947. India's independence, however, also divided her and made her two nations. Then, in 1948, he who had made India's freedom possible—Mahatma Gandhi—lost his bodily life in tragic circumstances and the whole Country was plunged in sorrow.

In our P.E.N. Centre we must record the passing away in March 1949 of Sarojini Devi, who was our National President from 1941 until her death. Professor S. Radhakrishnan succeeded her in that office.

While the exigencies of the times prevented our continuing the publication of this Series, we were active in other fields. Two All-India Conferences organized and held under the auspices of our Centre must be chronicled. The first met at Jaipur in 1945 (October 20-22) and the second at Benares in 1947 (October 31 to November 4). Our Conference Volumes are there to testify to the work accomplished—two for the Jaipur Conference (*Indian Writers in Council*, edited by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, and *The Indian Literatures of Today*,

* *Telugu Literature* (Andhra Literature), by P. T. Raju, published in 1944.

edited by Bharatan Kumarappa) and one for the Benares Conference (*Writers in Free India*).

And now we are glad to resume the publication of this Series and to bring out this volume on Sanskrit Literature. Sanskrit has been rightly called the " language of the Gods. " Unlike Avesta or ancient Greek and Latin, Sanskrit is not a dead language. In India, it still lives and some of us hold it will come back to its own in the future. Be that as it may, no study of the literatures of India is complete without a study of the treasure-house of Sanskrit literature and even a general acquaintance with Sanskrit as a language enriches the mind and the heart.

We reproduce below the following from the Foreword to our previous volumes in this Series and we wish for all men and women of letters an ever increasing contribution to the service of India and the World through creative and constructive work :—

The plan of this series of books is a simple one. A volume is devoted to each of the main Indian languages. Each book is divided into three parts:—(1) The history of the literature dealt with ; (2) Modern developments ; and (3) An anthology. There will be about sixteen volumes in all, and they were to have been published in alphabetical order. Our efforts to adhere to that arrangement occasioned too much delay, however, and so it has now been decided to publish the remaining MSS. in the order of their receipt by the Editorial Office. A list of these publications will be found elsewhere in this volume.

In editing each MS. I have kept to the transliteration of words from the Sanskrit, Arabic and Indian languages selected by the author.

I must thank my colleagues of the P.E.N Movement and several other friends who have helped with advice and valuable suggestions. And, of course, the P.E.N. All-India Centre and

myself are greatly indebted to the friends who have undertaken to write the books which make up this series. Without their co-operation we could not have ventured on the project.

For me this is a labour of love. But time, energy and other contributions made bring their own recompense as all are offered on the altar of the Motherland, whose service of humanity will be greatly aided by the literary creations of her sons and daughters.

SOPHIA WADIA

11th July, 1951

AUTHORS' FOREWORD

The object of this brochure, which was undertaken at the request of Shrimati Sophia Wadia of the P.E.N. All-India Centre, is to give, from the literary point of view only, a connected account of salient facts about the origin and growth of Sanskrit Literature in as convenient a manner as the writers could provide. It is hoped that the way the book has been divided into sections will provide a sufficient chain of historical summary as to the general points, such as, for instance, the nature and progress of Sanskrit language and the periods of its development up to the present time.

No one who attempts to act as a guide on the long journey from Vedic period to the present day can believe himself secure from error, unless he is very foolish or very vain. We can only say, for our part, that we have tried faithfully to avoid confusion, that we have, so far as possible, shunned controversy over dates and, in the matter of opinion and criticism, we have set down our honest impressions. We are painfully conscious that, in spite of the pioneering efforts of eminent scholars who had worked in the field of Sanskrit and given the fruits of their labours in the shape of authoritative books, it is a difficult, perhaps an impossible, thing to see the whole origin, growth and development of Sanskrit Literature in just proportion. Again, it will not be easy to view from a correct perspective each age, each writer and each event in relation to the entire history of Sanskrit Literature or to interpret

every significant writer with equal sympathy and fairness and to get at the core of every great writing. Our only consolation is, that the very vastness, nay, the very impossibility of our undertaking to provide in a short compass a total glimpse of Sanskrit Literature can be urged in mitigation of our inevitable shortcomings.

The magnitude of the task can be very well realized if only our readers will share the opinion that "it is no easy matter even for those of us who have studied Sanskrit to enter into the spirit of the ancient tongue and to live again in its world of long ago." But, at the same time, we are not totally strangers to many of the basic ideas of Indian thought and culture embedded in Sanskrit works. Moreover, our modern languages in India "are children of Sanskrit and to it owe most of their vocabulary and forms of expression." Indeed, the vitality and persistence of Sanskrit even at the present moment in our lives after nearly more than a century and a half of Western contact and English domination of our educational curriculum, cannot be denied. Perhaps, it is this same justification that has impelled the P.E.N. Publication Committee to include a brochure on Sanskrit Literature in the list of books prepared by them for popular understanding of Indian Literatures.

Nothing but self-deception will induce one to imagine that he has himself written, and none but an unenlightened soul will expect anybody else to write, a satisfactory account of the kind proposed here, free from blunders. Books like *Classical Sanskrit Literature* by Dr. M. Krishnamachariar, M.A., PH.D., M.R.A.S., and *A History of Sanskrit Literature and Sanskrit Drama*, both

by A. B. Keith, and a number of books from other Oriental scholars do provide us an immense storehouse of knowledge. We have resorted to them all for information, though we take upon ourselves the responsibility not merely for the errors of commission and of omission and the disorder in chronological events that might have escaped our scrutiny, but also for all the critical estimates put forward here. Our object in giving out our own approaches to the subjects is not to make these opinions prominent, but rather to present a basis for discussion in a critical frame of mind, in order to disarm prejudices in our readers if they suffer from any.

The anthology which forms a good number of pages here represents an effort to provoke and facilitate the reading of the originals themselves by those who are so inclined. They are fairly representative samples of Sanskrit writing but can in no degree claim to be based upon any definite plan of selection. The translations given here are our own, except the selections from *Manasara on Architecture and Sculpture* edited by Dr. Prasanna Kumar Acharya, I.E.S. Most of them are freely rendered into English with an eye only to the sense and spirit of the particular passage or verse. For otherwise the burden upon us will be greater, especially when we know there can be hardly anything in English translation from Sanskrit which can be termed worthy of or just to the original. Apart from the usual difficulty in a translation from one language to another in preserving the beauty of form of the original, Sanskrit presents more difficulties owing to the fact it is "full of words which have not only poetic beauty but a deep

significance, a host of associated ideas, which cannot be translated into a language foreign in spirit and outlook." Further we plead guilty to the prosaic lines we have substituted in place of verse forms in the original. The richer and more abundant the Sanskrit, the greater the difficulty we have experienced.

Again, in a short account like this, it is not possible to notice or make any passing reference even to the multitudes of minor poets and writers whose writings fill especially the later stages of Sanskrit Literature. When we come to modern times, a handful of those belonging to the South alone could be mentioned here, as the authors of this brochure are familiar only with their works. No doubt, there are equally worthy names in the other parts of India. But the printed copies of many of their writings are not available.

A word of explanation we have to offer for omitting deliberately in the scheme of the book a section upon Oriental scholars of the West and our own research scholars in the field. Though, strictly speaking, the results of their labours should find a place in the chapter here on literary criticism, still the fact of these books not being in the Sanskrit language made us eschew them for convenience' sake. Otherwise, criticisms of Sanskrit authors in the other Indian languages too would have to be included, making thereby a sumptuous addition to the subject dealt with here, which under the conditions of our undertaking will make the book exceed the number of pages allowed us. No doubt, we have rendered ourselves the poorer in deleting all such information which a modern reader would require in a book on Sanskrit Literature.

Before closing, we have to offer our grateful thanks to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, PH.D., for allowing us to inscribe to him this little piece of writing.

We are deeply beholden to Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., PH.D., for the valuable help he has rendered us in carefully going through the manuscript as well as in pointing out to us the required improvements in the subject-matter dealt with.

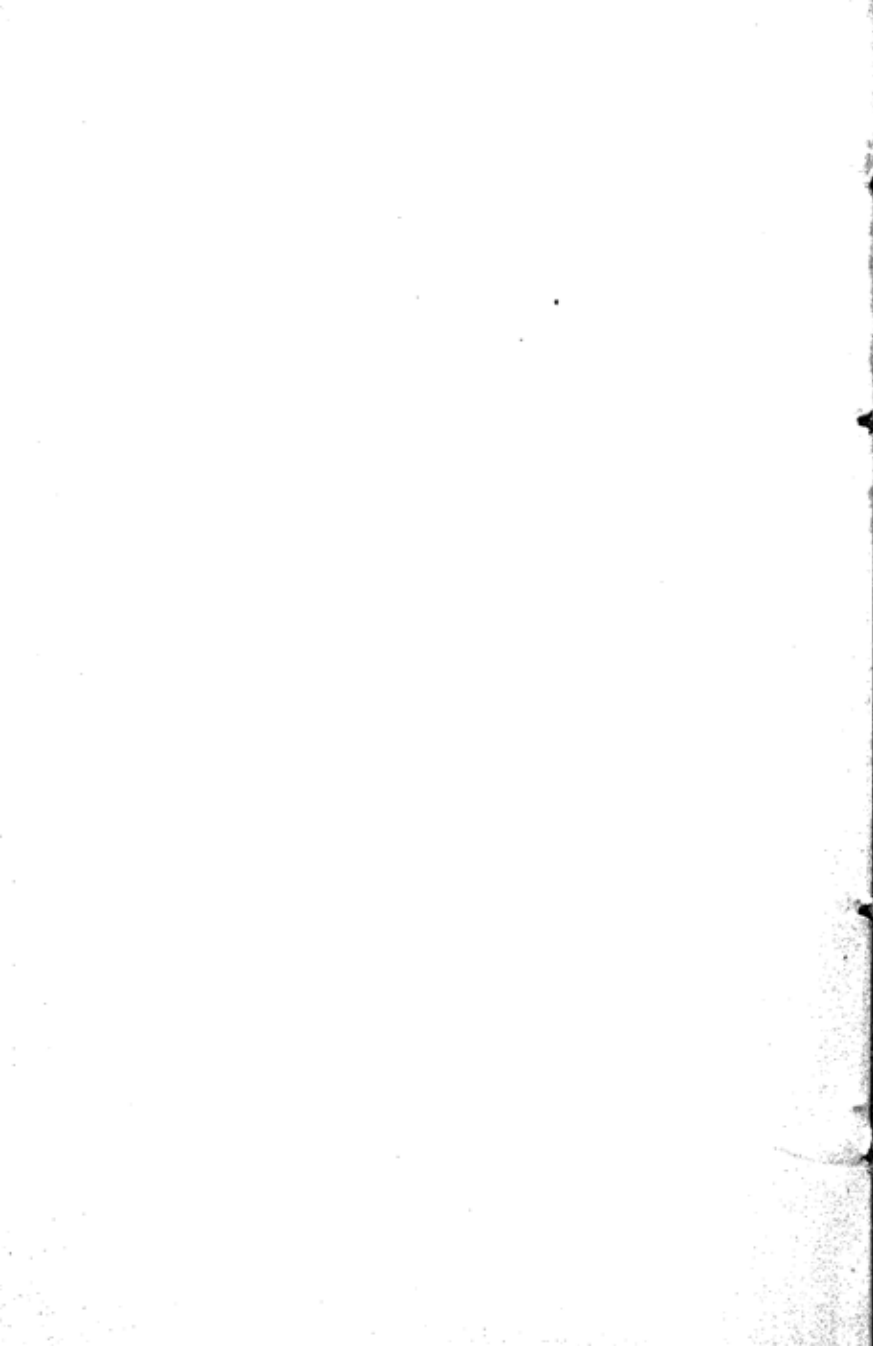
K. C.
V. H. S.

DEDICATED

To

DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN,

in token of admiration and esteem.



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SANSKRIT LITERATURE



Chapter I

THE LANGUAGE

I.—RELATION OF SANSKRIT TO THE WORLD

All languages, the world over, must have had their origins in the endeavour of human beings to communicate to each other their feelings and their thoughts. Indeed, every one of the languages must also have gained sufficient expressiveness and strength by its continuous employment in speech as well as its increasing adaptability as a vehicle of subtler shades of meaning. But circumstances do conspire sometimes, as in the case of Sanskrit, to dethrone a developed tongue from its important position. It is then that popular notions present a picture wherein that language assumes only second-rate importance and even earns for itself the misnomer of a dead language.

But he who knows something of Sanskrit will not hesitate to call it a most refined speech, having attained its development and finish by being spoken and made to suit itself to the needs of a growing civilization. Still, do we not perceive the contrast in status it occupies today among world languages? Normally people do not hesitate to say that Sanskrit is either too difficult to master or too dead to revive. If only we probe into

the matter more deeply, we cannot escape certain conclusions, based no doubt upon solid facts. They are, that Sanskrit is the most ancient among the world's great languages, that it is the fountain source of many Indian languages now in use and that it has contributed no little to the richness and growth of most of them.

Prima facie, it may seem paradoxical enough to say that a dead language like Sanskrit is living still and that its vigour is clearly noticeable in the symptoms of vitality of almost all the other Indian languages. To be invisible and yet potent in influence is something not quite unheard-of too in natural phenomena. For instance, we speak of electrical energy working many modern appliances. We know that electric current as such cannot be visible, but when conducted along wires, its power is felt not only as it moves big machines but also as it lights large cities and operates in a thousand other ways to make life more comfortable for human beings. Similarly can we prove Sanskrit running even to great distances and feeding many other tongues and dialects from its own inexhaustible storehouse of power and knowledge.

To describe the influence of Sanskrit by a more pleasing analogy, it seems like an old Queen, now grown grey in service, but who has to her credit the glory of having brought every bit of the land under her sceptre. She has made way for her own legitimate progeny to rule in her stead, allowing them each to carve out a kingdom and to flourish there in happiness and prosperity. She watches them, no doubt, from behind in order to help them gain their due share of recognition. We find the numerous other Indian languages, therefore, her own

offspring, bearing the true lineaments and other convincing marks of their parentage. Or, to change the simile, Sanskrit can be compared to a banyan tree, branching off in various directions, each new branch sending down fresh roots which form fresh trunks. If the main tree remains, the branches also live, having each its own individuality. At the same time the entire growth possesses an ultimate unity and continuity.

The word *Samskr̥ta* denotes a perfected thing. It signifies without a trace of uncertainty, the depth and range as well as the refinement and regenerating influence of the language. For we have in evidence words of rare coining, phrases of singular depth of thought and unforgettable figures of speech, which are Sanskrit's unique legacy to the world of letters.

In trying to understand what really was the cause for such an appellation being conferred on Sanskrit, we may have to digress a little. We cannot be blind to the fact that, howsoever great the service of any language to express man's thoughts, it is still not a perfect instrument for expressing them all. Many a speaker, however eloquent and gifted of speech, can be heard to exclaim that words fail him sometimes to express his innermost feelings. It is then that we notice that all languages without exception may have to be construed as defective beyond a point.

But at the same time we derive no little amount of surprise from finding an indissoluble bond linking up words and their meanings. If it were not so, language would remain merely a grouping of alphabets. Perhaps Sanskrit alone provides us the most interesting study of this aspect of the origin of words. Sound and sense

are so happily wedded in every word of the Sanskrit vocabulary. It tells us of the external and internal qualities of word-formation. Many layers of thought enshroud sometimes a root or an expression in Sanskrit and bewilder the student of language with their labyrinths of philosophical and metaphysical knowledge.

Taking first the expression *Samskṛta Bhāṣā*, we note that there are two words composing it. We know also that literally it means "Sanskrit language." We cannot be satisfied with the apparent meaning, but seek for more knowledge in order to find how it is a highly cultivated tongue. Just as one may be recognized as a cultured individual by his happy ideas and adequate language to express them, similarly a language possessing in its glossary or dictionary enough words for conveying infinite varieties of thought and subtle shades of meaning earns the title of "a language turned to perfection."

Sanskrit grammar (*Vyākaraṇa*) and etymology (*Nirukta*) supply us much information regarding roots and derivations of words. We can find thereby how much of the original sense of words has got either obscured or forgotten with the passage of time. Still scholars have never remained quiet, but have explored the regions of language and brought out the result of their labours in the shape of *Śāstrārtha* or the scientific treatment or interpretation of them.

To prove what we mean by a highly cultivated tongue and the encrusted thought-layers on words and roots, let us pick up an important word like "*Brahman*" and see what it contains. Translated into English somewhat inadequately, it gives us the meaning of

"God-head." The expression discloses the root "Brh" meaning "big." Our effort should not stop with merely tracing the root but should take in a number of philosophical understandings which have ultimately given birth to this single word expressing a great deal in itself. Starting with the search for God, some of the seers of old defined God as bigger than man. Others felt that God, though omnipresent, dwelt only in the space left unfilled by matter. This line of reasoning left them to conclude that God and matter were co-existing. A later school of thought strongly contended against this line of reasoning and established the inviolability both of God's omnipresence and His immanence. It was the last of the above-mentioned interpretations that finally satisfied philosophers of note. Hereafter there can be no more scope for further inquiry and exploration of this aspect of the nature of God, for everybody has begun to feel it well established. Hence "*Brahman*" has come down to us as an expression that implies much knowledge and philosophy that have gone into it.

Again, the word "*Loka*" signifies this world of ours. Inquiry into its derivation or origin will lead us to the root "*lok*," meaning "appearance." Much speculation was built upon the "appearance" of the world, conveying to us thereby the existence of some other thing which should be the ultimate Reality. There is an entire philosophical argument for the world being considered fleeting or evanescent of form, while the ultimate Reality or *Ātman* alone can defy change and disruption.

Further the words "*Jāta*" and "*Naṣṭa*," meaning "born" and "lost," respectively, have each interesting

tales to unfold. While the former denotes a thing "that is discovered," the later means "that which is lost to perception." On further examination, we find much significance attached to them, which only the more strongly proves what the scientists of the modern age have found after elaborate experiments, namely, that what is not can never exist and that what exists can never be lost in natural phenomena.

Thus in Sanskrit most of the words contain certain thought-contents which are indissolubly wedded to their sounds. Śaṅkara, the great philosopher, in his valuable commentary on the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* has dilated upon the significance of sound and sense or word and meaning. He based his theory upon a text or *mantra* (*Pādā Mātrā Mātrāśca Pādāḥ*) on which is also raised the entire edifice of *Mantra Śāstra*. Many other intellectuals of this land have set much store by the significance of this theory. Kālidāsa, the poet, endorsed the same significance in the first stanza of *Raghuvamśa* when he made obeisance to *Śiva and Pārvatī* united indissolubly in one form even as speech and its meaning are united in one word.

Many poets and writers of Sanskrit have appreciated the glory of *Samskṛta*, and Daṇḍin, a name to conjure with, extolled *Samskṛta* as the "language of the Gods." There are others who feel that the *Nāgarī* script itself, in which *Samskṛta* is enshrined, is a thing of beauty. For instance, the late Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, the well-known art-critic, breaks out in a passage in one of his books, *The Dance of Śiva*, thus: "The Brāhminical idea is an Indian 'city of Gods'—as *Deva Nāgarī*, the name of the Sanskrit script suggests.

The building of that city anew is the constant task of civilization."

II.—ORIGIN AND SPREAD

Existing data are sufficient to prove the wide extent of Sanskrit's influence in the land of its birth. There are evidences to confirm our inferences about its complete sway at one time over the subcontinent of India. The name *Maruḍvṛdhā* meaning "that which increases with the wind" occurs in a Vedic passage which, according to the interpretations of some commentators, is said to refer to the river Kāverī. From this it is clear, Sanskrit must have been quite prevalent also from earliest times in the south of India. Moreover, historical inferences point to the exodus of the early settlers of the north, the Aryans, to the south. Certainly Sanskrit, spoken by them, must have accompanied them in their trek to the south.

For nearly six or seven centuries, starting from the seventh after Christ, much of the thought and much of the philosophy found in the north and south of India correspond strikingly to each other. Of course the earliest references to Sanskrit can be traced in the *Rāmāyaṇa* where, in the capital of *Laṅkā* belonging to Rāvaṇa, Vedic chants were said to have struck a new-comer as a singular feature. No greater proof is needed, therefore, of the influence of Sanskrit even in the extreme south of India long before the birth of the Christian era. To be more specific, the *Śloka* or verse in the *Sundarakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* where Hanumān decides to speak only in Sanskrit, clearly indicates how far Sanskrit had become a synonym of a perfect vehicle

of expression to convey thoughts of human beings.

“*Vācam codāhariṣyāmi mānuṣīmiha Samskr̥tām.*”

Sundarakāṇḍa Sarga

Daṇḍin, the author of *Kāvyādarśa*, living in the 6th century after Christ, refers to the Southerners' style of writing in Sanskrit, thereby indicating the long usage of Sanskrit in the distant South. Tamil works on poetics written about the 9th century base their knowledge upon Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa*. Other South Indian languages also show the influence of Sanskrit. Thus in a book called *Kāvi rāja Mārga*, written in Kanarese and said to belong to the 9th century, much of the information can be traced to Daṇḍin's work on poetics. A Ceylonese writer at about the same period wrote a book on poetics, which also bears eloquent testimony to the influence of Daṇḍin. Its name is *Siya Bas Laka Pa*.

Śaṅkara, the great philosopher, said to have flourished about the end of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th century, carried on his very learned disquisitions and propaganda for Advaitic thought only in rich Sanskrit. It is further established now, that at the courts of some of the kings of the South, having purely Tamil as their language, there had lived bards and poets, say between the 14th and 16th centuries, who had an enviable equipment in both Sanskrit and Tamil. The *Jīvaka Cintāmaṇi*, ascribed to Tiruttakka Deva of the 9th century, bears the marks of Sanskrit influence in a great measure.

Another proof of Sanskritic influence throughout India is the fact that the Śaivism of the South, as revealed in books written in Sanskrit, travelled to Kāśmīr and made such a deep impression there that a

sect called Kāśmīri Śaivism grew up and became strong, closely preserving the tenets of the philosophy of Śaivism as understood in the South.

All these facts and more perhaps, will lead us to the safe conclusion that Sanskrit, possessed once of much influence, turned the waters of its imperishable springs to permeate every other language and slowly became a source of the unification of the land in thought and in culture. It is this culture that has truly made of us a unique civilization of the world.

III.—SANSKRIT : WHETHER SPOKEN

Without a language having been on the people's lips, there could not have been preserved such rich traditions and information as the Sanskrit language discovers to us. It is, therefore, not at all necessary to raise defences seriously against the cheap and baseless theory, that Sanskrit should ever have remained an unspoken language. Indeed, we can silence such criticisms as Sanskrit grammar being so very hard to master with the argument that, if so, it could never have been within everybody's easy grasp. For that matter, no subject or language can prove without obstacles to a learner ; he has to be determined to overcome initial difficulties.

There is a further charge laid against Sanskrit, that it has continued long without making any progress by adding new words or showing flexibility by adopting fresh ideas growing out of our contact with the outside world. It is true Sanskrit contains only words that are unchangeable in their connotation and hardly lend themselves to expressing the new-born philosophies of

the hour. If we pause a bit for reflection, we can find that almost every other language has the same defect in not having discovered words and phrases to suit ideas foreign to it or born of another civilization and language. English, even today, certainly does not contain equivalents to many Sanskrit expressions and technical words peculiar to the culture and religion of our country. From this it follows that we must cautiously proceed in such conclusion. We cannot rush to the view, at any rate, that English has remained without much real progress. No language worth knowing can be said to have all the necessary words for all the various thoughts and ideas of those whose culture and habits have not been part and parcel of its own. Sanskrit further suffers from a disadvantageous position in not having been the ruling or the ruler's language. Without the necessity to import fresh words, coined for expressing new ideas, there cannot be growth in a language. As a matter of fact, every language will betray its insufficiency when unable to cope with modern requirements of expressing scientific terms that are born every day with fresh scientific experiments and discoveries.

In spite of these many drawbacks, Sanskrit is still able to raise its proud head among the world's best languages owing to its immense treasure-house of knowledge upon many a valuable subject. Books on practical and useful subjects like carpentry, house-building, cooking, the rearing of plants, the taming of elephants, horse-breeding, etc., are written in Sanskrit. Strangely too, the art of thieving and the art of enticement necessary for one carrying on a dancing-girl's occupation, have received the attention of Sanskrit writers, and we

have interesting books upon them. To show how necessary knowledge of the Sanskrit language must once have been, there are available to us, through the Gaekwad publications, forms of legal documents like promissory notes, wills, sale-deeds or conveyances etc.

To give one more conclusive proof of Sanskrit's prevalence as a spoken tongue, employed even by the common folk of the country, we have only to refer to a story in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, where a charioteer of low birth is represented to be conversing in Sanskrit with one deeply learned in grammar.

IV.—SANSKRIT'S INFLUENCE UPON OTHER LANGUAGES.

From the foregoing evidences of the wide spread of Sanskrit, we can easily understand how strong could have been its influence upon many of the Indian languages that have subsequently arisen. Apart from some of the Northern Indian languages and dialects which bear definite marks of the *prākṛt* of old, some of the South Indian languages like Malayalam, Telugu, Kanarese, etc., bear ample traces of Sanskritic origin. This fact is more clearly noticeable in the development of these languages in their later stages. Sometimes Sanskrit roots are retained, though the terminals have undergone a change in a manner independent of Sanskrit grammatical rules. Tamil also, regarding whose origin scholars have not yet come to a definite view, preserves many Sanskrit expressions and idioms in an unchanged form. But the most ancient work on grammar in Tamil, called *Tholkappium*, is said to have been based upon a Sanskrit grammar called "*Aindram*" (Born of Indra). Scholars working in the field of Tamil literature have,

therefore, remarked about the author of *Tholkappium* having been well versed in Sanskrit and Tamil alike.

Philologists all the world over consider that there must have been originally a common language from whose stock every other known language of the world must have emanated. To such a view Sanskrit alone has contributed a great deal by the fact of its beginnings running into prehistoric times.

Chapter II

HISTORY AND GROWTH

I.—THE SCRIPTURES

In the main we can classify early Sanskrit literature as Vedic and Classical. There is a belief, which is not supported by Western scholars, that Vedic Sanskrit, which preceded in time every later development, was the original language, gradually lending itself to a more finished type with the passage of years. The Vedic period must have extended approximately between the 15th and 2nd centuries before Christ. Again, certain theorists opine that Vedic language was never spoken but only retained in writing, while Classical Sanskrit became the normal vehicle of intercourse among people.

A superficial comparison of Vedic and Classical literatures will give us the impression that, while Vedic literature dealt with a subject-matter relating to the other world, Classical literature devoted itself purely to things of this earth. But real acquaintanceship with the two will bring out the true nature of Classical literature as having much of Vedic thought embedded in it. We can even boldly assert that all works in Sanskrit literature, save perhaps a few, bear indelible marks of the influence of Vedic thought. If at all there is any

distinction between Vedic and Classical Sanskrit, it can be found only in the rules of grammar governing them and the style of writing followed by them.

Leṭ and *Loṭ* in Vedic literature both signify the imperative, *Leṭ* (the Vedic mood) will almost correspond in form to the present tense. For example, for *Bhū* (to be) the present tense is *Bhavati* and the *Leṭ* or Vedic mood is *Bhavāti*. For *Yaj* (to sacrifice) *Yajati* is the present tense and *Yajāti* the Vedic mood. In Classical Sanskrit *Leṭ* (Vedic mood) is never used. Another peculiarity of Vedic Sanskrit is the form of cases. For *Karṇaiḥ*, in Vedic Sanskrit we have *Karṇe-bhiḥ* as the instrumental plural. Of such peculiarities of Vedic usage we can give innumerable illustrations. Pāṇini, the great text-writer on Sanskrit grammar, devotes an entire chapter to verbal forms in Vedic language or *Vaidika Prakriyā*. He has elaborately supplied us with details distinguishing Vedic grammar. Though the tense and case sometimes differ in Vedic and Classical Sanskrit, the meaning attached to words hardly differs. Authoritarianism, therefore, naturally steps in to assert that the Vedas submit to no limitations of time for anything found in them.

Western scholars take the view that the Aryan civilization must have flourished in the Indus Valley and the tracts now recognized as the Punjab, and that the Vedic texts contain indications of the geographical features of the country inhabited by the Vedic compilers. Other internal evidences also point to the extent of Vedic influence in the portion between the Himālaya ranges on the north and the Vindhyas in the South. As regards the compilation of the various Vedic texts,

Western scholars ascribe them to many authors as well as to different periods.

Turning to our own conception regarding Vedic times and influences, let us start first with what the Vedas signify to us. The word Vedas connotes knowledge from its root *Vid*, to learn or to know. The Hindu belief, unshaken for many thousands of years, is that a person well-versed in the Vedas alone deserves the honour of being termed a scholar. For the Vedas typify to the Hindu every kind of knowledge under the Sun, hence the traditional impression of one well-grounded in the Vedas as a really well-equipped man. Moreover, for ages men of light and leading in this ancient land have not swerved from what the Vedas had ordained as right and proper for them to do. The Śāstras born of our ancients have also invariably taken shape from an urge to unravel only Vedic thought and philosophy. From the earliest times known to us, the inviolability of the Vedas in all aspects has received iteration from all thinkers.

Even other religions and thinkers of the world cannot ignore the intellectual calibre of those who have interpreted the texts and philosophy enshrined in the Hindu sacred Scriptures. But what has drawn the minds of Hindus to the Vedas is not so much the result of their reasoning as of their faith in them. This does not mean that the Hindus suffered from any inherent lack of reasoning faculty. But they have evinced a greater partiality to the efficacy of faith by which, according to them, more things are wrought both on earth and in heaven than with feeble instruments like the human intellect. Moreover, everybody born in this

land easily gets convinced of the needlessness for further exploration in a field which has already had enough of the best human intellects spending their energies in coming to the same conclusion of the Vedas being inviolable. Generations in this country have simply trodden the path lit by the wisdom of our ancients. Nothing fresh need be done to prove the authority of the Vedas. If at all any concern for them has to be shown, it is only by way of preserving what has been with us till today and given us such comfort.

The authorship of the Vedas next claims our attention. All Śāstraic writers, with no exception, believed that the Vedas were not born of any single individual, God or man. Tracing back our knowledge we find no one able to say from whom the Vedas originally emanated. Everybody vouches for their exactness and detail as learnt from a teacher's lips. Jaimini, placed by scholars in the 3rd century before Christ, explains the Vedas as having emanated from no author and as only known to have been transmitted from master to disciple in the long chain of Vedic scholars. Thus a long line of teachers carried on from generation to generation the imparting of knowledge or the study of the Vedas.

The expression *Adhyayana* or study mostly denotes the receiving of knowledge of the Vedas alone; for another word for reading, *Paṭhana*, gives us also the idea of study. Further there has been the custom, that for study of the Vedas students have always approached a preceptor. Hence the direct living contact between master and disciple in the ancient system of education of this land. The name of *Śruti* signifying the Vedas, gains also an explanation from the habit of disciples'

listening to their masters for higher knowledge and never resorting to any book of religion.

For a moment, let us turn to the argument by which conservative thought tries to establish the authorlessness of the Vedas. According to them, a book written with the aid of any one's intellect or consciousness cannot but neglect in some measure at least the personality of the writer. In that case, truth, however clearly brought out by him, will be qualified, *i.e.*, it will not be absolute. If it could be maintained that texts like the Vedas never were born of any person, then by no means could it be afterwards asserted that defects of commission or omission could be entertainable in them. Further, conservative thinkers believe that the Vedas as waves of sound can always remain in the ether around us. And we know today that sound-waves, once produced, do not die or merge with one another at all. With our perceptions more acutely tuned by austerities, we may perhaps be in a position to listen to those sounds distinctly. Some of the great seers of old became aware of this phenomenon only through the acquisition of such super-powers, and postulated the theory of the origin of sound alone before anything else in creation. Moreover origin of the universe is deemed by our ancients to have taken place only in the manner the Vedas have described. The *Bhagavadgītā* confirms the point thus: *Evam Pravartitam Cakram* (the cycle thus started) in the context where the Lord describes the origin and process of evolution of the entire universe.

Modern scientific knowledge—even the most advanced—has not been able to postulate any such theory of sounds preceding the origin of all else in crea-

tion. For it would seem obvious that without some object to create sounds there can hardly be the occasion for sound-waves starting in ether. But scientific experiments are going on from day to day, and one cannot be certain that our ancient theories will not, on a future date, be found correct by modern scientists. For we are more than once assured by modern savants of the very amazing powers of observation of our ancients in the field of scientific knowledge. Let us not, therefore, be prepared to dismiss once for all the older theories of the origin of sound.

The Vedas or their numbers seem to be endless from what we obtain in references from the texts now available. Maybe this fact will be accounted for if we recognize the prevalence of the Vedas in the form of sounds originally. If that theory holds good, then it could be expected that some of the sounds should have escaped the ears which heard them, however acute they might have been. Some may still remain unrecorded by the tympanum of the normal human ear.

What have been handed down to us as the Vedas from time-honoured sages of the land are divided into four groups by the name of the *R̥k*, *Sāma*, *Yajur* and *Atharva Vedas*. Each of these is again subdivided into *Sākhās* or branches, of which only a few are traditionally learned by heart.

R̥k means lines of metrical shape. In ordinary parlance it may be equated to a verse. The *R̥gveda* therefore covers, on account of its name, that portion of the Vedas which contains such verses as mentioned above. *Sāman* signifies a *rāga* or a melodic tune. When verses with the same subject-matter as the verses

in the *R̥gveda* are sung in a particular manner of *Svara* or note-combination, they assume the appellation of *Sāma Veda*. On sacrificial occasions verses are either repeated as *R̥k* as sung or *Sāman*. Other names to signify these two are *Śastra* and *Stotra* respectively. When *Sāman* is sung, every syllable receives greater articulation and accentuation. Generally *Sāman* singing will be found more enjoyable on account of the musical quality of the chanting. It is deemed so much more enthralling than any other chanting known to us, that one can easily understand the significance of the Lord's own statement, in the "CELESTIAL SONG," that among the Vedas the *Sāman* should be recognized as a symbolical representation of Himself.

The *Yajur Veda* mentions many names of sacrifices and enumerates their peculiarities. Though verses corresponding to the description of *R̥k* are found here also, still another type of composition called *Samhitā* preponderates. *Samhitās* are neither metrically shaped lines nor sentence-like formations. The mantras referred to by the other Vedas obtain here very clearly.

These three major Vedas are familiarly spoken of as the Three (*Trayī*), because of their greater usage on important occasions such as sacrificial performances.

The *Atharva Veda* is not so much resorted to as the other three. The reason for its unfamiliarity may be traced to the paucity of persons practising its tenets. The available knowledge of it, unlike the other three Vedas, is only to be sought in written texts. It contains both *R̥k* and *Samhitā* and resembles the *Yajur Veda*. Very little for use in sacrifices finds mention in this Veda.

These four Vedas assume different names according

to the prominence of one or other of the four chief participators at a sacrifice. As a matter of fact the names follow the names of the chief officiating individuals like the *Adhvaryu* or chief priest, the *hotra* or preceptor, the *udgātā* or singer and the *Brahma* or witnessing person.

II.—BRAHMANAS, MANTRAS AND UPANISADS

The Vedas also undergo classification in another way such as the *Brāhmaṇas*, *Mantras* and the *Upaniṣads*. The *Mantras* are pronounced during actual performances of sacrificial rites. The *Brāhmaṇas* comment upon or elucidate the proper use of such of them as are employed during the sacrifices. The *Upaniṣads* enjoin upon the individuals officiating at sacrifices such mental poise as will be born of detachment from worldly desires. The *Upaniṣads*, therefore, receive the group-significance of *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* as distinguished from *Karma Kāṇḍa* or that part of the Vedas which details actual rites for the performance of the various sacrifices. Further the *Upaniṣads* have also earned the distinct title of *Āraṇyaka*, because of their precious messages having been received in the forest dwellings of the sages of yore. *Upāsana Kāṇḍa* is also another epithet to characterize *Upaniṣadic* thought, which particularly deals with the practice of austerities or *Yoga*.

The language of the *Mantras* appears peculiar enough to be distinguished easily from the other Vedic texts. The *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upaniṣads* possess a style that looks not unfamiliar because of their approach to the later Classical style of writing. There are, again, points of difference between the *Brāhmaṇas* and the

Upaniṣads, in spite of their seeming similarity otherwise. The Brāhmaṇas, having to deal with the significance of the Mantras, possess perhaps difficult words and idioms. The Upaniṣads, on the other hand, strike us as possessed of a dignity of style and a sonorousness of diction which make them attractive as high-class literary writings.

III.—LITERARY GRACES IN THE SCRIPTURES

There are very many passages in the Vedas which stand out for their intrinsic literary quality. If only we familiarize ourselves with Vedic writing, we may even develop a partiality for its peculiar power of expression. The ear craving for rich sounds and musical cadences will be amply compensated by the treasures contained in the Vedas. Very often the subject-matter itself will be of utmost loftiness of conception. Man's highest nature is made the text of a comparison with natural phenomena. A particular passage bringing this out occurs in the *Yajur Veda*. A tree in full bloom, emitting fragrance to the breeze which carries it in all directions, is made a fit analogy to a man of nobility doing good actions, the fame of which easily travels everywhere.

IV.—INFLUENCE OF THE VEDAS ON CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The hymns of the *Rgveda* have been appreciated by all and especially by Westerners. There is a description of the Dawn or *Uṣas* which unfailingly captivates literary minds. Dawn is represented as a beautiful damsel appearing in garments revealing and yet not revealing her form as she approaches her Master and

Lord, the Sun, in his morning effulgence.

There are other such passages occurring in the *R̥gveda*, which give its readers a taste of its literary substance. The Sun's powerful rays are compared to spirited oxen that dash in battle against horses. The same Sun's ray is said to resemble a cow that forcibly drags itself to its calf. Again a lover is pictured as leaping into the arms of his love. The entire piece illustrates a *Māloṇamā* or a garland of similes, because of the different images strung together in a single description. In a passage occurring in the *Yajur Veda*, we find the sun and the moon said to resemble two babes frolicking about on the playground of the heavens. In short, Vedic literature contains many instances to prove its high quality of poetic vision and literary execution. The very basis of the *Rasa* theory, so priceless a possession of æsthetical appreciation in Sanskrit, owes its development to the sentence *Raso vai saḥ* (the Soul is enjoyment itself) occurring in the Vedas.

Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra* or Art of Dancing is a book of high authority for later æstheticians to draw upon with profit ; and it is interesting to note that the Sage refers to no less a source than the Vedas themselves as the repository of all æsthetical knowledge. To make the point clearer, the text is said to be drawn from the *R̥gveda*, the singing from the *Sāman*, the gesticulations from the *Yajur* and the *Rasa* or sentiment from the *Atharva Veda*. All the fine arts, like poetry, music and painting, are supposed to have taken their origin and shape from the Vedas alone. The *Viṇā*, an instrument of exquisite quality, is said to symbolize the Goddess *Śrī*. The dance preceptor is pointedly referred to in a

passage in the *Yajur Veda*. Sculptors are mentioned in the *Śukla Yajur Veda*. Again a particular description of Dawn as a danseuse convinces us, without any further proof, of the extreme familiarity the Vedas disclose with the art and traditions of dancing. So does every other fine art which has gained its zenith of glory in our country trace its early beginnings to one or other of these four Vedas.

Chapter III

OFFSHOOTS OF SANSKRIT

I.—SAMSKRT and PRAKRT

Research workers in the field of Sanskrit literature have been able to say definitely that the Buddha taught his disciples only in the language of the people. He also preached his religion to crowds who could have listened to him raptly only in a language which must have been the spoken tongue. Evidences show this much, that the language spoken then was an offshoot of Sanskrit. We find from internal evidences that Buddhistic literature, traced to the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., contains a type of dialect called Māgadhī or that which belonged to the country of Māgadhas. In the 3rd century B.C., some of the Buddha's ardent followers employed Pālī, another variation of Prākṛitic language. Many religious books and secular writings were couched in Prākṛt. In some of the rock-edicts of Asoka the Great, the language is deciphered to be Prākṛt, while some of the titles of the edicts are given in pure Sanskrit. These facts will sufficiently help us in our inferences that, though Sanskrit was deemed of higher merit, Prākṛt alone formed the normal vehicle of intercourse among ordinary people.

According to our traditional accounts, Prākṛt denotes a thing which is the very opposite of Samskr̥ta. While Samskr̥ta described a thing of perfection, Prākṛt typifies the negation of perfection.

Prākṛt must have originated, according to some of our own thinkers, in the mutilated attempt by ill-equipped persons to speak Sanskrit. Inarticulation and a certain slurring over of words must have produced something like Prākṛt. Bhartṛhari in his work called *Vākya Padīya* has something more to contribute to this line of thought when he says that women and children have a peculiar enunciation of words which results in the Prākṛtic form of speech. Perhaps some such reason must have induced the old dramatists of our country to make women characters, servants and the rest speak always in Prākṛt.

Prākṛt lends itself to minor dialectical forms, such as the Apabhramśa, which is said to be an offshoot of Prākṛt, even as Prākṛt itself is of Samskr̥ta. We find Rasika Sarvasva, the commentator on the *Gīlā Govindā* giving such an explanation as that mentioned above for the rise of peculiar dialects.

"Prākṛt" also signifies a thing that is natural. Therefore it lends support to some of the modern theorists to conclude that Prākṛt was the spoken language of the earliest forest dwellers before the dawn of civilization in India. They further opine that when the natural speech of the people became more and more sophisticated of form and grammar, Samskr̥ta or finished speech stepped in, in its place.

There is yet another school of theorists who mainly look at the gender, tense and case-forms in Prākṛt, and

from their resemblance to Vedic types conclude that Prākṛt must have owed its direct descent to Vedic Sanskrit alone.

However ear-filling Sanskrit speech may be, still there are many who feel a natural bias to Prākṛt. A poet of old describing Prākṛt says : "What a beautiful thing this Prākṛt is ! It is as alluring as the very lips of one's sweetheart. Indeed nectar alone flows from it." No doubt Prākṛt beautifully fits in with women and children.

II.—VARIETIES of PRAKRT

The Sage Vararuci evolved rules of grammar for Prākṛt. He showed in his work how Prākṛt was an offshoot of Samskṛta. Moreover, ancient writers in Sanskrit felt no hesitation in saying that other languages differing from Sanskrit but yet tracing their nomenclature to Sanskrit, were termed Prākṛts. One of the varieties in Prākṛt is known by the name of Prākṛt itself. There are four well-known divisions of Prākṛts as made out by Vararuci. They are Prākṛta, Paisācī, Māgadhi and Śaura Senī. Paisācī and Māgadhi are said to have been born of Śaura Senī. Prākṛta alone is said to have descended directly from Samskṛta. Writers on Poetics such as Hema, Daṇḍin and Vāgbhaṭa classified Prākṛt into several types. Bharata in his treatise on Dancing makes out a case for Prākṛt being employed in the dramatic art.

Some Prākṛts trace their names to the countries of their origin. Mahārāṣṭrī is derived from its place of birth Mahārāṣṭra. Mahākāvyaś like the famous *Setu-bandham* are written in Mahārāṣṭrī. Māgadhi, Avantī,

Lāṭī and Prācyā belong to Māgadha, Avantī, Lāṭā and Eastern countries, respectively. Ābhīrī is said to have belonged to cowherds. Paiśācī, known to belong to ghosts, is said to have been spoken by aborigines and hill-tribes. Guṇāḍhya, the compiler of the *Bṛhatkathā*, employed Paiśācī throughout his compilation. The names of Cāṇḍālī and Śābarī denote their association with the untouchables and the hunting tribes, respectively.

The prevalence of so many forms of Prākṛt itself proves conclusively the theory of India having had Samskr̥ta as the one unifying source of all languages. Local influences were chiefly responsible for varieties in styles of speaking and dialects. The Prākṛts, if scanned thoroughly, will be of no mean help to researchers in the field of Indian history in tracing Āryan influences upon the Indian languages now spoken.

Chapter IV

THE PURĀṆAS

I.—FEATURES AND AIMS

The Purāṇas form the earliest of the classics in Sanskrit literature. Still, there is similarity in the language of the Upaniṣads and that of some of the Purāṇas. For the Purāṇas also contain simple words, direct speech and profound thought. Readers generally find no occasion for growing tired of the Purāṇas. The natural flow of the narrative and the ingenuity of the ideas found in them easily attract all.

The Purāṇas often appear in the form of verses. Difficult expressions are hardly traceable in many of them. No doubt, the repetition of ideas sometimes creates *ennui* in the reader ; still, compensations to the *Rasika* are many, such as the rare treasures of thought and diction in them. The theme too partakes of a didactic quality and philosophical substance. Many later treatises on ethics and philosophy draw for their sustenance upon verses occurring in the Purāṇas. Moreover, they contain much information and many traditions which form the bases for later writings upon literary subjects. The only strong criticism that could be levelled against some of these Purāṇas is that they

do not achieve brevity at all.

II.—USEFULNESS

The Purāṇas are looked upon in this country as the chronicles or records of wonderful deeds of great men of the past. We come across many names of the Gods dwelling in the Heavens as well as of demons living in the Nether World. We learn of mortals who had left behind the imperishable memory of their great deeds of valour and their noble thoughts. We can surmise from the way the Purāṇas are written that their authors believed in their authenticity.

Wise men of old considered the Purāṇas as cherishing the highest ideals worth striving for by individuals. Some of the greatest truths discovered by philosophy are enshrined here in story form, and they make a special appeal to us because of their setting. The *Padma Purāṇa* mentions the efficacy of listening to the Purāṇas as of equal merit with that of listening to the Vedas.

The word "Purāṇa" denotes that which is ancient of origin. The episodes related by the Purāṇas belonging to a past age, the entire compilation receives the title "Purāṇas." Another meaning of the word "Purāṇa" is that it can be fresh, though born of a bygone age. Certainly listeners to the Purāṇas, who feel no flagging of interest in the themes which they contain, will easily bear out the latter significance of the word.

The Purāṇas have their own distinct contribution to make otherwise also. They tell us of the birth of the Universe and the destruction of Creation. They provide us with knowledge of the great cycles of time (*Manvan-*

tarah) and the chronicles of earthly kings. The chronology alone among the contents needs the addition of fresh matter. The rest never changes. Some of the Purāṇic details immensely help research work in the field of ancient history.

III.—PURANAS AND UPA-PURANAS

Purāṇas are divided into Mahā-purāṇas and Upa-purāṇas. The features dealt with already are common to both types. But certain special marks separate the bigger Purāṇas from the minor ones. Tradition ascribes to each group eighteen Purāṇas. But in actuality the Upa-purāṇas comprise an even larger number than tradition has declared them to possess. The Mahā-purāṇas claim Vyāsa as their author. Some of the Upa-purāṇas too trace their origin to him. But evidences are not wanting to show that other writers of no less merit must also have had their share in the task of compilation.

Further classification is found possible among the Mahā-purāṇas such as into *Sātvika*, *Rājasa* and *Tāmasa*. Another classification as of Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta Purāṇas has also been in vogue. The only redeeming feature in such a division, so far as is within our knowledge, is the fact that, in spite of emphasis upon the glorious aspects of particular deities, the readers' vision never gets clouded by sectarian prejudices against the way they are written.

IV.—LITERARY MERIT

Some of the Purāṇas betray beyond a trace of doubt the marks of the Classical literature of a later

period. The *Śākuntalam* of Kālidāsa has its prototype in a version found in the *Padma Purāṇam*. The *Kumāra Sambhavam* and the *Vikramorvaśiyam* of Kālidāsa, again, have similar episodes found in the *Skānda Purāṇam* and the *Viṣṇu Dharmottaram* respectively. Maybe these similarities are the result of additions of a much later day to the existing Purāṇas, after the age of Classical literature.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is a great source of inspiration to all those who belong to the *Bhakti* school of thought. It deals with the life and achievements of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The style of writing cannot be said to be simple or attractive. But profound thoughts and poetical vision are the chief marks distinguishing it from the rest of the Mahā-purāṇas. The well-known episode or charming outpouring, called the *Gopikā Gitā*, has found a place in this great book. Tradition has it that the great compiler Vyāsa, not having attained serenity of mind even after finishing seventeen of the bigger Purāṇas, was inspired to write this masterpiece, which subsequently restored to him the peace which the heart obtains from the joy of devotion.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇam* and the *Śrī Bhāgavatam* are deemed the twin sources of support to the philosophical speculations of Śrī Rāmānuja. Śrī Rāmānuja himself refers to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇam* somewhat frequently. Many of the other philosophical schools too take for their texts verses of pregnant significance found in the Purāṇas. On the whole one characteristic of the Purāṇas cannot escape our notice, i.e., they all form a channel, as it were, for the free flow of our cultural heritage and tradition as well as the norms of our philosophical

thought.

V.—ITIHASAS

Itihāsas form an integral part of the Purāṇas. Apart from the name, very little can be found in them to distinguish their character from that of other Purāṇas in general. But, of course, there is a main feature to differentiate the two. Certain requisites are enjoined as obligatory upon Purāṇas. Such hide-bound rules do not restrict the scope of Itihāsas.

The word *Itihāsa* denotes that which happened. This supplies the clue to the belief that the incidents recorded in them are either what actually happened or were perceived by the person relating them with his own physical or super-physical powers. From this the inference can be drawn that the Purāṇas were not actually recorded from observation then and there, but from hearsay and traditional belief in their veracity. Another conjecture is also possible, that the Itihāsas must have been of a later date than the Purāṇas.

The Itihāsas are not many in number, at any rate not those within our knowledge. The *Mahābhārata* of Vyāsa is the well-recognized Itihāsa we know of. The longest narrative of more than a lakh of verses is encased in this work. The language is generally easy of understanding but occasionally stiff and proves a stumbling-block to the progress of the reader. Poetic flights and literary graces of outstanding range and variety fill the pages of this long poem. Vyāsa was no ordinary artist. His comprehensive vision embraced many a topic of both immanent and remote value. Some of the world's best types of characters stalk about

in the pages of this great epic. Chronicles of kingly lines and movements find elaborate treatment here. If the author has given out his own estimate of his work in these words: "What is not here cannot be found elsewhere," it only proves a well-deserved compliment paid to his own laborious attempt.

There are persons who view the *Rāmāyaṇa* also as an Itihāsa, because of the traditional belief in the authenticity of the life and career of Śrī Rāmachandra on earth. Moreover, the *Rāmāyaṇa* is hailed as the first poem or *Ādikāvya*, from the fact that every other available work of every other poet models itself more or less upon it. Of course, beyond these two epics no other work is deemed of such merit as to be spoken of as an Itihāsa. Compositions of adequate length and composed of many *sargas* or cantos became the normal feature of Kāvya after the age of Itihāsa.

Chapter V

THE ŚĀSTRAS

I.—THEIR MEANING AND OBJECTIVE

It is no exaggeration to say that if this ancient land of Bhārata Varṣa has preserved anything at all without any break in continuity, it is her great systems of religion. Hindu religion in its ultimate analysis is another name for the philosophical tenets translated into daily life and conduct. Adherence to Vedānta is the gospel of every one of our books of old, whether the Vedas, the Purāṇas or the Itihāsas.

Philosophy becomes systematized thought when the subject-matter is treated scientifically. Treatises containing disciplined thinking and metaphysical arguments are generally termed Śāstras. "Śāstra" denotes anything laid upon us as obligatory. Compulsion is implied necessarily when penalties for disobedience to injunctions become normal events. Hence, perhaps, a certain amount of disinclination on the part of the people to the codes of conduct enjoined by the Śāstras. It is to persuade the unwilling minds that resort is usually had to Purāṇas, Kāvya and other literary forms containing the same objectives of knowledge embedded in them. But the bright intellects among us derive no

easy satisfaction in dogmatic assertions but are satisfied only by ratiocination of a high order that would lead to safe conclusions by reasonable arguments. Therefore, the study of the Śāstras in order to acquire discipline or to improve the reasoning faculty has become normal. Moreover, the intricate reasoning in our metaphysics and our philosophy defies anything but hard study and a reverent approach.

Of course the generality of easy-going individuals may regard the study of the Śāstras as a sheer cloak for pedantry and ostentation. But in truth one cannot minimize the value of such earnest studies as contributing immensely to the onward march of the intellect. Every one of the Śāstras preaches only the righteous path of duty of every individual born in the world and reveals the inner meaning of the Vedas as helping human beings to reach their goal of life. Nevertheless, however much the same the objectives of all the Śāstras may appear, their distinctiveness and individuality are not unsubstantiated claims. For we can unmistakably trace in each of the well-known Śāstras a mine of original thought and intellectual speculation that are not commonly met with anywhere outside. Very often the Śāstras provide us clues to the various stages of brain capacity of the persons receiving the ideas contained in them. The degrees in ability of human brains also entail the necessity for a larger number of books with their individual appeal or merit. This habit of dealing in a systematic way with all subjects made even the treatment of common topics like cooking, the curing of ailments and the governing of countries receive in Sanskrit the appellation of Śāstras.

Two main groups compose the Śāstras, the *Āstika* and the *Nāstika Darśanas*. The former require faith in the text of the Vedas and in the existence of the other world. The latter dispense with Vedic texts and make the individual depend upon himself, as represented by his own reason, for Salvation. The latter group includes the Cārvāka, Jain and Buddhistic schools of philosophy. The Cārvāka does not rely for anything upon the Vedas or the long tradition or wisdom of our Sages. The followers of this school attach practically very little or no value to things not observed or perceived with one's own senses. This school postulates only four elements as composing the universe and leaves Ākāśa or ether out of account. According to this system of thought, man is born only to live well and to have no worry about a future world or the sequel to his sinful actions. The motive for the evolution of man, in this philosophy, is only an energetic life. Mere perception alone is the basis of this philosophy the founder of which is claimed to be no less than the preceptor of Heaven, Bṛhaspati.

II.—BUDDHISM

The Buddhists are followers of the religion preached and propagated by Gautama, the Buddha. Unlike the Cārvākas they believe in the existence of the Almighty as well as of the other world. According to the teachings of the Buddha, in the state of illusion or Samvṛti the existence of God and of the other world is but a logical inference. But once Nirvāṇa or the state of Liberation is attained, there will be nothing positive to be gained for the soul of man, in other words, it will be

a state of negation or *Śūnya*.

The followers of the Buddha treat their master as a true representative on earth of Tuṣita or the Supreme Being. The chronicles of the Buddha's life give us accounts of the Master's meditations getting disturbed by Māra or Love and of apsaras who tried to wean him away from his austerities. Certainly one outcome of these stories is clear, namely, that the Buddhists also have a belief in the Heavenly regions and in the existence of persons known as Immortals residing in such a place.

The sheet-anchor of the Buddha's philosophy is his own personal authority. His utterances disclose his disbelief in the authoritarianism of the Vedas. His own teachings start from the Enlightenment he received. Many of the conclusions arrived at by his understanding of the Truth are born of his personal observation or penetration into life and his own reasoning. When once the scope for argument and personal divination gets recognized, *Tarka Śāstra* or Theories of Logic find their steps necessarily or normally employed in advancing any arguments in Buddhistic philosophy. Maybe what we describe as *Tarka Śāstra* at the present day has departed much from the old system, which alone is much in evidence in Buddhistic philosophical speculations. None can gainsay the fact of the older system possessing more systematized thought and advanced reasoning than the later *Tarka Śāstra*. Indeed, Dharmakīrti, one of the eminent philosophers of the Buddhistic Order, will easily put to shame later logicians of our own *Tarka* system.

The Buddha had four important disciples. It is

recorded in Buddhistic annals that the Great Master taught his disciples in a manner that suited individually the brain capacity of each to receive wisdom. Hence, perhaps, the differences in thought given expression to by the disciples, which range from the negation of an all-pervasive Brahman to the perceptibility of the Universe to the individual.

Lord Buddha's religion became wide-spread in India for a period only. Soon Hindu revivalism, under great thinkers and leaders of thought, brought once more the people under its sway, so that Buddhism had to seek a home elsewhere. Hence the exodus of Buddhism to the countries lying to the North, South and Far East of India. One particular theory found in the Buddha's teachings can gain little acceptance in any of the other schools of philosophy except Advaitism, namely, the doctrine of *Māyā*. One great landmark of achievement in the realms of thought left by the Buddha's philosophy is the freedom and scope for intellectual exploration, recognized in India from very early times.

III.—JAINISM

The founder of this independent school of thought or religion is known as Jina or Arhat. He enjoined upon his followers the doctrine of *Ahimsa* or non-violence to anything in Creation by thought, deed or speech. He required strict adherence in practice to this important principle of life. Jainism has not, like Buddhism, suffered total eclipse in the land of its birth. There are still followers of Jainism to be found in every part of India, who make it a habit to have their supper before

dark on account of their earnestness to avoid the possibility of insects falling into the flame during the night.

Jina's own authority forms the mainstay of the religion that he preached. The Hindu Scriptures find no recognition in his system of thought. It is natural, therefore, that Brahman or Ātman is recognized in that religion in only a limited sense. It is for this reason that Jainism has been given no place in the group of orthodox Darśanas.

IV.—ĀSTIKA DARSANAS OR ORTHODOX THOUGHT

The main orthodox philosophical schools are six in number—Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Vaiśeṣika, Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta. "Darśana" is a word suffixed to all these schools because of the perception of Ātman or Absolute Knowledge through every one of these six systems. Moreover, though these six orthodox schools have in common features distinguishable from the unorthodox systems, still they are also, among themselves, greatly at variance on points other than the acceptance of the Vedas as of Supreme authority. There are certain fundamental conceptions in some of them which may even appear as differing radically from ancient conceptions of our religion, as, for instance, the Sāṅkhya system's not referring to God's existence at all or the Yoga system's not attaching any great binding importance to the Vedas or their ritualistic aspects or the Mīmāṃsā system's not considering any other aspect than the ritualistic doctrines as of supreme efficacy. Still the above three are grouped in the *Āstikya* Religion because of one common significance, tradition having accepted them as belonging to the orthodox group of

philosophical speculations.

No doubt there are confusions prevailing, pertaining to the true confines of these schools of thought. For instance, Sāṅkhya and Yoga are sometimes spoken of as one and the same. Again Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta are mixed up. As a result of such confusions, some begin to include Vyākaraṇa or Grammar as a Darśana proper because of their anxiety to fill in the gap otherwise created in the group of six Darśanas. Of course, one final conclusion we cannot escape from, namely, that the Darśanas are always six according to all known schools of thought or philosophy.

V.—SANKHYA

The Sage Kapila originated this system. His works are not in existence today in any part of the world. Íśvara Kṛṣṇa, a later follower of this school, however, gave to the world in a condensed form of about seventy verses what had been expressed in the lost works of this system, like the *Ṣaṣṭi Tantra*. This text of Íśvara Kṛṣṇa alone provides the basis for the development of the Sāṅkhya philosophy. According to Sāṅkhya reasoning, *Buddhi* (intellect) is also matter. *Puruṣa* or Soul remains inactive but confuses the functions of *Buddhi* with its own. It is on account of this fundamental confusion that much of the world's sorrow is imagined by man as his own. Only if *Puruṣa* gets dissociated from the intellect, will *Mokṣa* or Liberation await man. The Universe or Creation as it is within our perception cannot be unreal to this school of philosophers.

The word "Sāṅkhya" means enumeration as well as knowledge. Both meanings seem appropriate enough

in their application to this system of thought. Because the Sāṅkhya system analyzes and classifies the world into twenty-five entities, the first of the above significances suits the title given. Again, because Sāṅkhya tells us to differentiate between matter as such and Soul, the latter significance also befits the title applied to it.

VI.—YOGA

Yoga deals with the practice of a philosophy treated theoretically in Sāṅkhya. But Yoga gives more information than the Sāṅkhya. While Sāṅkhya hardly mentions a Supreme Being, Yoga definitely concludes its existence. Yoga specifically dwells upon the control of the mind and the senses in the practice of austerities for realization of the Supreme Being. No doubt, in laying emphasis upon practice of the various steps leading to Realization, it has necessarily to ignore faith in Scriptural authority as of paramount significance. Still Yoga cannot dispense with faith altogether, as it believes in the preliminary initiation into knowledge by a Preceptor or Master, whose command or approval alone paves the way for ultimate Realization crowning the Yogic practices of a disciple.

Patañjali is acclaimed as the author of this great system of philosophy. He has elaborated the entire system in short terse sayings or Sūtras, as they are called. Vyāsa is said to have written the commentary on the *Patañjali Yoga Sūtras*. Yogins generally follow the guidance of both the original text and the commentary. Perception, Inference and *Āgama* are the three pivotal principles upon which the entire thought in this system revolves.

VII.—VAISESIKA AND NYAYA

When Buddhism became rampant, the followers of the Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya systems alone combated the new thought with all the weapons in their armoury. They re-established the conception of a Supreme Being as all-powerful and inevitable.

Vaiśeṣika was founded by Kaṇāda. He relied upon Perception, Inference and Comparison as supporting any final method to reach God. There is not much practical difference between Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya systems, save in one or two details. Nyāya is spoken of by another name, more familiar, as Tarka. The above two systems penetrate into the significance of the things that we perceive. By a gradual reasoning process of elimination, they both aim at the annihilation of all sorrows which alone, according to them, can bear the fruits of Realization.

VIII.—DUHKHADHVAMSO MOKSAH

(Tarka Saṅgraha Dīpikā)

In the present educational syllabus for imparting Sanskrit, Tarka is generally imparted as an essential for disciplining the students' powers of concentration. Tarka is more thus taught than Vaiśeṣika, the reason, as is apparent, being that Tarka is more refined of manner than Vaiśeṣika. Nyāya, therefore, a complete and self-sufficing system, is more often resorted to for training the intellect in ratiocination. Moreover, many of the technical terms found commonly in all the other Śāstras have found a repository in Tarka. *Anumāna* or Inference, a basic concept in Tarka, is to a great extent employed by all the other Śāstras. Pāṇini, the Gram-

marian and Kaṇāda, the great Logician, are by tradition put together for reverence. One important distinction between Tarka or Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika is that the former approves of the authority of *Śruti* or the Vedas in a more pronounced way than Vaiśeṣika.

IX.—MIMAMSA

Mīmāṃsā is one of the integral parts of the system of studies in the Vedas. It is full of principles interpreting the textual matter of the Scriptures. A thousand sections or *Adhikaraṇās* illumine the subject. Every section in turn formulates a rule of interpretation. They are so well constructed that they are of immense use generally for the interpretation of other texts wherever they may be found in Sanskrit scientific treatises. For instance, legal books receive considerable elucidation of their texts by the aid of such rules of interpretation.

Mīmāṃsā is also called *Vākya Śāstra*. Maybe the reason for this is the habit of construing every sentence in this system of thought. Anyway the very name "Mīmāṃsā" implies a method of investigation of knowledge with rare dedication to details.

Jaimini was the originator of the Śāstra. The subject is divided into twelve chapters. Though they are unfolded in the form of Sūtras, still they are not so finished as the *Vyākaraṇa Sūtras* of Pāṇini. One Śabara was the elaborate commentator upon Jaimini. His commentary has no less impressed itself upon scholars than the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali for its style and execution.

Another glossator, called Prabhākara, added his

own contribution to Śābara's work with the name of *Byhatī*. Kumarila Bhaṭṭa was a scholar of greater repute, who wrote out critical notes or *Vārtika* upon Śābara's book. His is a name to conjure with in the field of knowledge. His services have been recognized by scholars, ancient as well as modern, as of inestimable value. Certain new points found their way into Kumarila Bhaṭṭa's work, which show their deviation from Prabhākara's earlier line of thinking. The two lines of thought received greater and greater accentuation so that, with the passage of time, two distinct schools within Mīmāṃsā, the Bhaṭṭa Mata and Prābhākara systems became familiar to scholars in the subject. But it is indeed strange that we have today only expounders of Bhaṭṭa Mata, while of the Prābhākara or Guru Mata system only a few or none at all exist. A third school of Mīmāṃsā attributed to Murāri also came into existence, though there is little trace of it found today except in the familiar adage for describing novelty in ideas as "Murāri's third path."

Kumarila Bhaṭṭa has totally condemned Buddhistic principles in his great work. He was such an addict to intellectual honesty that a story describes him as having learnt the Buddhistic philosophy directly from a Monk of that Order. It seems that he had to represent himself as a regular Monk of the Buddhistic Order and for that he had to put on the yellow robes. The story further adds, that in remorse for what he afterwards realized to be a wrong act on his part, he made a fire of grain-chaff, threw himself into the flames and got consumed by them. He was also distinctly known as one of the earliest to expound the theory of the human

conscience as a factor to be reckoned in intellectual speculation. He gained much support for this from Kālidāsa the poet, whom he seems to have greatly admired, for he recognized Kālidāsa as of equal rank with a writer of Smṛti.

The Mīmāṃsā depends for its sustenance upon the Scriptures alone. Practically, God is deemed by this school as of no significance. Its followers base the correctness of their view on the impersonal aspect of the Vedic teachings. Therefore they say that the behests or commands of the Vedas have simply to be obeyed without hesitation. If the Vedas have omitted a particular action or rule of conduct from their purview, certainly such an action or rule of conduct will have to be abandoned as without sanction.

The influence of Mīmāṃsā was once so wide-spread that none of the writers in the other Śāstras failed to show regard for this school of philosophers. Some of the earlier writers went to the extent of describing Mīmāṃsā as a limb of the Person of the Goddess of Learning. Though every Śāstra adopts Mīmāṃsā rules of interpretation when dealing with textual construction in its respective field of knowledge, one particular point of Mīmāṃsā cannot have escaped the notice of all of them, namely, that Mīmāṃsā nowhere makes even a feeble reference to the existence of Ātman or Absolute Soul, nor does it postulate the way to Liberation as achievable only by the realization of Ātman.

X.—VEDANTA

Generally the Darśanas speak of *Mokṣa* or Liberation directly as well as indirectly. They all differ also

as to the way Salvation presents itself to the seeker of truth. Even Mīmāṃsā, which does not separately deal with *Mokṣa* proper, has impliedly suggested some such thing when dealing with Heaven as the abode of Happiness. Every other school, too, whether avowedly or unavowedly, points to some objective similar to it. For instance, Tarka has analyzed everything in Creation only to arrive at an ultimate stage where sorrows get destroyed. Sāṅkhya has realized the Creation of the Universe and its ultimate destruction only to arrive at a stage where neither will affect the individual. Yoga has sought out the way in *Yama* or control for realizing every other of the remaining *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*. Mīmāṃsā speaks of the actual works of merit mentioned in the *Karma Kāṇḍa* portion of the Vedic texts as indispensable to everyone for raising himself. As a matter of fact, every one of the Śāstras lays stress upon some aspect deemed by it as of greater importance or significance than the rest, though in doing so every one of them passes by the Absolute or Ātman, which proves the main preoccupation of Vedānta alone.

VYASA, the versatile genius and encyclopædic writer, elucidated the governing doctrines of Vedānta in about 500 Sūtras called the *Brahma Sūtras*. These Sūtras are directly the outcome of a mind discussing the Upaniṣads. Even as Mīmāṃsā relied upon the *Karma Kāṇḍa* of the scriptural texts, so Vedānta takes for its basis the *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* or the latter portion of the Vedas, containing the Upaniṣads. Vedānta has also another appellation to describe it—*Uttara Mīmāṃsā*. Mīmāṃsā proper is generally known also as *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*. Hence there are those who opine that Mīmāṃsā and

Vedānta together form one integral whole of Vedic thought. But in ordinary parlance they are deemed quite different, since they differ widely in the principles and methods of approach to the Supreme Goal for man.

The *Brahma Sūtras* of Vyāsa are contained in four chapters of his book. They take for the development of thought the following topics in this order: the exposition of the Upaniṣads, the need for removal of differences existing in the various schools, the elucidation of the methods for attaining oneness with the Brahman and the correct definition of *Mokṣa* or Liberation. Great teachers like Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Mādhva and Śrī Kaṇṭha, and a host of lesser teachers belonging to the respective schools of thought, have each tried to comment upon and explain the contents of the *Brahma Sūtras* of Vyāsa.

SANKARA (8th and 9th centuries A.D.) is considered the best of those who have dealt with the *Brahma Sūtras*, as the later commentators refer with great regard to his opinions in their works. Modern scholarship assigns Śaṅkara to the latter half of the eighth and the earlier part of the ninth centuries after Christ. Tradition, in conformity with what has been handed down from the historic mutts established by the great Śaṅkara himself, places him in much earlier times, *i.e.*, somewhere near the first century before the Christian era. Internal evidences from Śaṅkara's works indicate earlier writers upon the *Brahma Sūtras* of Vyāsa. But the existing commentaries are from the four great commentators, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Mādhva and Śrī Kaṇṭha, who have each propounded philosophy according to how they understood Vyāsa's mind.

Śaṅkara's philosophical expositions have the wider influence and the greater number of followers in the world. The story of Śaṅkara's life or *Śaṅkara Vijaya*, as it is called, makes it out that the philosopher passed away in his thirty-second year. But within the short span allotted to him, he had roused the intelligentsia of the land to imbibe courage from his doctrines of Advaita or Monism. Tradition fondly traces his entire *Bhāṣya* or commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* to the extraordinary brilliance he evinced even while so young as sixteen years of age. Śaṅkara's predecessor, Kumarila Bhaṭṭa, had already done much pioneering work in re-establishing Hinduism as against the pervading tenets of Buddhist thought. It was Śaṅkara's lot to rout the contending forces against Hinduism completely and even to infuse courage of conviction into his followers by sheer intellectual reasoning, which stands to this day defying any amount of argument and metaphysical speculation advanced by religious thinkers the world over.

The doctrines of Advaita embodied in his philosophy lifted the minds of thinkers from the intellectual torpor they were in. His minor works too contributed not a little to a sane and steady outlook in his followers. Apart from his great commentary on the *Sūtras* of Vyāsa, he wrote clear elucidations of the ten major Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and other religious texts. His main philosophy in every one of his works was to emphasize the oneness of all life. Since Śaṅkara's gifts were versatile, he composed a number of poems also in praise of various deities of the Hindu pantheon, each of which contains the same philosophy of the indivisible nature

of all life on earth. Even single stanzas of his do not fail to reflect this most crucial point of his philosophy, so that any one who chances to peer into his mind will not be left unrequited in the matter of his philosophical conclusions expressing themselves unambiguously in every one of his compositions, big or small. It may surprise people to be informed of the practical mind of Śaṅkara resorting to this method of making everything he wrote so self-contained in order to be of immanent help to individuals, who might have no easy access to his major works, in an age when printing had not come into use. But, strangely enough, in none of his numerous writings can be found one single instance of his attempt to refer to himself in any of his previous books or expositions. In this he showed a rare freedom from vanity of the type usual with writers, however ancient or modern.

To summarize Śaṅkara's main principles, man suffers more often than not from a lack of intellectual reasoning; it is when the mind clears up and receives light that the enshrouding darkness of his ignorance frees him from its clutches. The bright world around us is but a dream made of such substance as would disintegrate at the touch of penetrating thought; every bit of life around us will bear out its forming part of a single soul or Ātman; only sight of Brahman or Ātman can release the mind from clinging to physical matter; the Absolute Soul or Brahman always remains one and indivisible; it expands and penetrates everywhere like ether; people in their unenlightened state of mind imagine all living bodies to contain individual or separate souls; such a conception will be discovered to

be hardly sustainable the moment people realize how they resemble separate dwelling places, distinct in their individuality and associations, but the moment these structures collapse, the space walled in erstwhile by their separate edifices mingles with all space outside without leaving any trace of separateness; similarly when the physical vesture of every individual decays, the soul within escapes destruction and mingles freely with the all pervading Ātman or Eternal Life. The usual analogy drawn by philosophers is of the mud-pot enclosing space that is circumscribed by the shape and size of the pot but which loses its identity of shape and colour the moment the pot breaks and the space erstwhile within the pot mingles with the space outside. Therefore, each individual soul is nothing but the Brahman itself whether we call it God or the Supreme Being.

Śaṅkara relies upon the basic conceptions contained in the Upaniṣads. He makes no mere assertions but shows by ample arguments how the conclusions arrived at are inevitable. At the same time dry intellectualism and argumentation by themselves do not fascinate him. But in trying to found a philosophy upon what the Upaniṣads have reiterated, he shows an intrepidity of thought and an originality rarely met with in any other thinkers, either ancient or modern. Some feel that Advaitic thought in its entirety is contradictory to all other schools of reasoning in the field. But if one scans Śaṅkara closely, not only will he escape criticism for his individualistic faculties of reasoning, but also he will reveal a scheme of philosophy which actually lends room for every other school of thought to form but a step, as

it were, in the building up of his own arguments. He cannot help leaving on sober minds an impression of his unapproachable genius for taking infinite pains to understand every other view-point and to arrive at a position which easily looks but a distinct step in advance of all others and an unprecedented method of intellectual comprehension of the Hindu religious thought and culture.

Generally every founder of a school of thought inclines to a strong rejection of other view-points. Śaṅkara is an exception to the generality. He acknowledges boldly what he owes to others. Udayanācārya, a later thinker and profound scholar of metaphysics, compares himself by the side of Śaṅkara to a retail dealer, while Śaṅkara resembles a wholesale vendor of the merchandise of thought. Swami Vivekananda in recent times called Śaṅkara's intellect an eighth wonder of the world. Even Śaṅkara's own opponents have owned his remarkable intellectual gifts. Professor MacDonnel, an Oriental scholar of deep sympathies, has expressed the view that the Advaitic thought of Śaṅkara is the natural consequence of the teachings of the Upaniṣads.

MADHYA (13th century). When a school of thought takes root in the soil and the followers of the school begin to exceed the legitimate bounds of practicality by their enthusiasm for and glorification of its founder, it is natural indeed for others to grow intolerant of that unhealthy or extreme form of demonstration. Further, they cannot remain idle, but try to find out ways of controverting the ideas rampant among the followers of such a school and of bringing the latter round to their

own views. Mādhva, another great religionist, began to evolve a fresh approach to Upaniṣadic thought which is identified as Dualism (Dvaita). If our own conjecture could be allowed scope for divining the causes for the slow ebbing of enthusiasm for Śaṅkara's philosophy in the period when Mādhva lived, we can trace it to what the popular notion must have confounded in Śaṅkara's philosophy with lack of faith in God's greatness. The Advaitic thought, which foresees a stage of development when the individual soul realizes the Brahman and tries to equate itself to it, must have looked too brave or too wild for the later religionists to follow with any equanimity.

According to Mādhva traditions also, *Bhagavān Pūrṇa Prajña* was born only during times that showed a tendency to nihilistic philosophy and faithlessness in the existence of things in creation. Mādhvācārya re-established, according to this school, the reality of the world and the existence of Individual Souls. His thoughts are the very antipodes of monism proper. Dualism speaks of differentiation as of the very essence of creation. Mādhva openly contradicted Śaṅkara's doctrines as not founded upon the teachings of the Upaniṣads, and concentrated his interpretation upon a phrase found in the Upaniṣads, according to his own authority: "*Satyam Bhidā*" (Difference is true). He postulated, therefore, his perception of fivefold differences as of utmost significance to his thought. These may be enumerated as differences between (1) Godhead and individual, (2) individual and matter, (3) individual and individual, (4) matter and matter and (5) matter and Godhead. He insisted upon worship

of God in some form as essential to every individual's attainment of salvation. He approved of the caste system as of consequential importance to his doctrine of differentiation.

A great devotee himself, he began to exhort his followers to worship God in some form. He was averse to those who through reason tried to establish an ultimate Reality or Absolute Soul without shape or colour. He did not conceal his criticism of Advaita as an unhealthy consciousness born of one's own importance on a footing of equality with Paramātmā or Godhead. He wrote voluminous commentaries on the *Brahma Sūtras*. He also wrote commentaries on the Upaniṣads. A work of Vyāsa called *Brahma Tarka*, which is referred to in his *Sūtra Bhāṣya* is unfortunately lost to the world. On the other hand, his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which is available, contains an interesting range of ideas. He writes in the fashion of Sūtras, terse and pregnant with meaning.

Dualistic thought has taken much support from the Nyāya philosophy. The followers of this school have both unity of language and customs wherever they may be found. There are many mutts of this religion, which do great work by way of propagation of the tenets of Mādhva's philosophy. Many hundreds of the followers of this school are also found in many parts of this subcontinent.

RAMANUJA. (12th century). The doctrines of this religious teacher may strike a superficial on-looker as a sort of compromise between Śaṅkara's monistic thought and Mādhva's dualism, though Rāmānuja was earlier chronologically than Mādhva. For in the philosophy

of Rāmānuja we find both the concept of difference and that of non-difference reconciled and made the edifice of an independent school of thought. According to Rāmānuja the Universe is the entire body of which God alone is the Mighty Soul. Just as the individual cannot be identified with his limbs and just as one limb cannot be identified with another, God is of the Universe and at the same time apart from being identified with it. Further, in creation itself no one object is identical with any other, as there are real differences among various objects. Therefore it is that this philosophy earned the name of qualified monism or Viśiṣṭādvaita.

No doubt Rāmānuja's basic concept contains the omnipotence of Paramātman in the figure of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa. The other Gods of the Hindu pantheon, including Śiva, rank next in merit when compared to the All-powerful Viṣṇu. The staircase by which to reach Salvation for the individual is disclosed as follows: By constant devotion and entire surrender of oneself can an individual soul or Jīvātman try to ascend the steps of spiritual experience. The individual soul in the course of its ascent reaches the final rung of the ladder, namely, Vaikuṇṭha, where Śrīman Nārāyaṇa always resides. The individual soul becomes radiant of form as it approaches the abode of Nārāyaṇa, itself lost in the advancing bliss of His presence. The very presence of God is another name for Ānanda or Bliss. The individual soul does all such *Kainkaryas* (services) as would invoke God's grace permanently for itself. Apart from this attitude of a servant to God, there can be nothing more for the individual soul to aspire for. Therefore it

is that *prapatti* marks out the path of surrender of the self, so much emphasized by Rāmānuja as of vital importance. The ego of the individual must be consumed by the fire of devotion, and once the individual soul gets purified of its dross, then the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha without hesitation accepts him to be near him, perennially doing services of his own free choice. But one essential difference always is maintained between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, namely, that though in every way the Jivātman that has raised itself to perfection resembles God Himself, it will not bear the Goddess Lakṣmi and the gem, Kaustubha. Other attributes too of His personal glory will distinguish Him from the Jivātman.

The dualistic aspects emphasized by Mādhva are not totally contrary to this religion. Again, devotion to God happens to be common to both these religions. Rāmānuja was not the first to develop his school of philosophy. Many earlier thinkers had provided the germs in their works for his philosophy to receive sustenance and grow. Rāmānuja correlated the ideas of his predecessors and systematized them into a cogent theory. Like the other two Ācāryas in the field of Hindu revivalism, he also wrote profound commentaries on the *Brahma Sūtras*, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and other religious texts. But the Upaniṣads did not directly receive his comments, though this significant gap left by him in the scheme of textual support for his philosophy was filled up by the endeavours of a later follower of his school called Raṅga Rāmānuja. Moreover, Rāmānuja's followers place implicit faith in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* as of equal importance with the

Upaniṣads.

The contribution of Rāmānuja to the existing works on philosophy was a commentary on the basis of Bodhāyana's brief commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* called *Vritti*, that was already in existence. Rāmānuja's philosophy satisfies the normal cravings of a religious soul in pinning its faith upon God for salvation. There are not unusual difficulties placed before the followers of this school in comprehending the philosophy. Himself a very austere person, Rāmānuja showed such extraordinary humanitarian principles that men deemed outside the pale of Hindu society were reclaimed by the zeal of his religion. In this he was a great forerunner of the modern reformist tendencies in Hindu religious revivalism.

SRI VENKATANATHA or VEDANTA DESIKA, as he was more familiarly known, was the next in rank to Rāmānuja, who was responsible for carrying on the work of propagation of the principles of thought embedded in the school of qualified monism or Viśiṣṭādvaita. His inestimable services in that field as well as his great literary output, not to speak of his powerful personal traits, brought him such wide recognition and admiration from the followers of the school, that in a few decades after his existence a niche in the Vaiṣṇava temples became his due.

XI.—VYAKARANA OR GRAMMAR

If philosophy leads one along the path of Realization, so does Grammar, according to traditional belief, take a man to the goal of Liberation. No doubt the main occupation of Vyākaraṇa is to formulate rules to

govern the construction of sentences and to explain the origin and connotation of roots, etc. Vyākaraṇa itself denotes the correct shaping of language. A superficial impression may give the idea that this Śāstra deals with the forms and not with the substance of things. The peculiarity of Sanskrit grammar is not to stop with mere externals alone, but to delve into the derivations of roots, the theories of sound and the sense of words and the philosophy underlying the significance of language as such. Sanskrit grammar has earned another appellation to describe it: *Śabda-Brahma Vāda* or the school of thought upholding the philosophy of sound.

In the entire sphere of Sanskrit language nothing can ever escape the control of grammar. Some of the most intricate rules are found in it. Pāṇini was the author of the *Vyākaraṇa Sūtrās* and his work is considered by the best of world's intellects as of supreme merit. A deep study of his Sūtras, it is said, will leave the impression of Pāṇini's visual observation of every word which by the "Sūtra" or thread of his thought he had joined together. Śaṅkara, no mean judge of intellects, breaks out in admiration of Pāṇini's monumental labours in bringing out this work of grammar.

The *Pāṇini Vyākaraṇa Sūtra* contains 8 chapters and the entire edifice of his philosophy of grammar is built upon 14 fundamental Sūtras. In those 14 Sūtras he has arranged the Sanskrit alphabets in a particular order which itself assures the student of the compactness and exhaustive quality of his writing.

Tradition says that before Pāṇini's work there were 8 other systems of grammar. But they are not as yet known to exist anywhere. Patañjali added his

invaluable commentary on the work of Pāṇini, which earned the high epithet of the *Mahā Bhāṣya* or great commentary. Patañjali's language easily approaches the style of the text-writer himself. Another important grammarian known as Vārtika Kāra added a few more Sūtras to Pāṇini's number.

Even if Vyākaraṇa cannot satisfy all the requisites of a Darśana as some would proudly claim for it, still one fact cannot go unnoticed, that, without a very good grounding in Pāṇini's Sūtras, no knowledge of any of the Śāstras can be effectively acquired. Ānanda Vardhana has opined that the study of Pāṇini is indispensable to the mastery of any of the schools of philosophy.

We cannot close this chapter on the Śāstras in Sanskrit without mentioning the many other fields of thought and information available from the Sanskrit language on subjects like astrology, astronomy, law, medicine, political science, etc. As it will be difficult to bring in even something of these subjects within the modest limits of this venture, we have perforce to leave the vast storages of knowledge contained in them not even hinted at.

Chapter VI

KĀVYAS (POETRY)

I.—TREATISES ON POETICS

Spoken words are easily forgotten. But those preserved in writing cannot easily share the same fate. Further, writing in an effective language impinges itself on minds that read it. It is said that the power of language can even bring to life what otherwise looks insipid or dead.

The language of a poet has a more interesting tale to unfold. Though the same words and phrases as those we use are found in his vocabulary, the moment he touches them with his magic wand, they assume quite a different shape and appear suffused with a deeper significance. The same sound and sense of words when they emerge from the depths of a poet's soul appear as if winged, lifting us along with them to regions of rarefied thought. We christen such surcharged language, Poetry. From the tiniest to the biggest object in life, everything receives a poet's attention and becomes immortal, for it gains the power to last as long as language itself lasts. The story of the exile of Śrī Rāmacandra and the brief voyage of a cloud equally live in the memories of people, if poets have

only invested them with form and beauty. Be it again a little bee or a glistening dewdrop, a poet hardly neglects it but enshrines it in lines of his own inimitable fancy.

The poet's eye does not stop with mere sight, but develops insight as well. The peculiar joy resulting from a poet's observation of life has, therefore, for us a genuine attraction. His place in our hearts gets more and more secure with our imagination stirred and our hearts expanded. We become in course of time practically slaves to him and feel no shame in hanging on the very tip of his pen.

But poetry does not respond easily to everybody's wooing. Hence perhaps the saying that Poets are born, not made. In Sanskrit we find a higher standard adopted to classify one as a poet. Unless one has a comprehensive range so as to foresee clearly all things, he cannot be dubbed a poet of great mark. In order to achieve such an eminence and such comprehension, a poet needs much more of insight than acute beings are ordinarily endowed with. Meditation on the verities of Life and Death becomes an integral part of the poet's preparation for his task. The famous prologue to Vālmiki's writing of the *Rāmāyaṇa* presents to us in what category high-class inspiration had been placed by our ancients.

True, a great artist does not stop with gleaning the fruits of his own observations of life. He creates another world, as it were, with his pen. And for that a great theme or a lofty ideal alone proves a fit subject or material to work upon. When once possessed of a great theme, language naturally gets resolved for him.

Such, the world over, has been the experience of great masters of literature.

No doubt there is a view that writers require only something like a peg to hang their ideas on. Certainly we may feel no aversion to things slight or even unworthy when handled by a trained writer, for he can make them appear beautiful. Still, the intrinsic merit of his writing would lack the power of sustenance. Critics may spare him for the time being the subject of his choice, even as they may not much mind sawdust or sand particles when mixed up with sugar. But the true *rasika* or connoisseur of art may feel the hollowness of it all when testing it in the crucible of his poetic experience. For a genuine art-lover knows how to distinguish between a wayside stone worshipped with flowers and water and the really anointed image in a shrine which can alone radiate sanctity all around.

To put it more succinctly, then, our ancient æstheticians looked to poetry to elevate the morals and to substantiate the ideals of humanity. Theories like Art for Art's sake never had an iota of appeal to them. They would not permit a poet's choice of subjects out of anything and everything in life. Except one possessed of such genius as not to need any standards to guide his path to glory, the rest in order to succeed in their endeavours have to submit to the regulations imposed on writing by veterans in the field.

The ancients had certain clear-cut ideas about the aim of art and of literature. Art and literature should paint man as born and destined to strive only for higher ideals. In order to secure him the realization of his dreams, a particular line of conduct or pattern of

existence should be ordered for him. Such ordering is aided more effectively by books that like lamp-posts light the pathway for him. The Śāstras guide one no doubt towards the same objective, but they do it with less of attraction for him. Poetry has its own allurements for the reader, when the same imperative rule of conduct is disguised for him in fancy and colour. Ānanda Vardhana, the high-priest of literary criticism, remarks that poetry becomes purposeful only with the above aim sustained and vivified by it.

Again, all are not endowed with gifts for the enjoyment of things of abstract fancy. Something more substantial or concrete, say a motif or a sentiment in a piece, is really needed to capture their hearts. This is what is generally characterized by Sanskritists as the main *rasa* of a piece. And *rasa* requires for its sumptuousness of quality a high-class conceit of universal appeal. It is therefore, perhaps, that the saying goes that none but a *Rṣi* (Sage) comprehends life exactly and possesses the vision to guide mankind by his poetry. A Kāvya to be a model for all times must be from a *Rṣi* and a *Rṣi* alone.

We hear often of a poet's life being enriched with experiences of a kind sufficient to inspire in him poetic moods. We know also that the generality of authors only reflect their personal strivings and hopes in what they produce. Even the great Vālmiki, it is said, became influenced by his environment. If the waters of the Tamasā cleared up like the minds of people, good and true, he also received an immense impetus to serenity of mood. If again one of the twin-birds was pierced with an arrow and died, he also became

stricken with sorrow and melted into refrains of the most sublime poetry. It proves the truth that no one can escape the atmosphere in which he lives and has his being.

Indeed Vālmiki belonged to the order of poets to whom life and literature were always one and the same. We can also imagine others who can have passing moods of such inspiration. They are persons who enter into a poetic frenzy for the time being and resemble the creepers which get clothed in sprouts with the fresh breath of spring. Certainly such poets of the occasion never get ranked with the best. Only such of them as reflect their very souls in transparent lines of high poetic imagination are worthy of a place among the universal or immortal ones.

The discussion naturally takes us to the definition of poetry and what, at any rate, was deemed good or high-class poetry by our old writers on poetics. There are numerous writers in Sanskrit who have defined poetry and its characteristics. A section of them believed in form alone as making for excellence in poetry. Others there are who cannot omit anything as un-essential, from the conceit to the language of poetry. Further, they look upon poetry as best only when every aspect of it is rounded off to perfection.

Daṇḍin, one of the best representatives of the Sanskrit language, in support of this point of view would show the mistake of imagining poetry to be perfect with even some slight deficiency about it. He vivifies his statement by comparing such poetry to a face, fair but with a slight patch of leucoderma on it somewhere. Another group of writers feel strongly that

even as the moon has spots on her face which do not detract from her beauty, so efficient poetry may not suffer because of a few defects in it. Mutually contradictory as may seem these ideas when placed side by side, they are not far from representing the actual experiences of people as they react individually to poetry. Certainly we can imagine circumstances which are responsible for such ideas taking shape and forming themselves into theories.

Writers in Sanskrit have detailed a good number of *Lakṣaṇas* or features for poetic compositions. Bhāmaha, the earliest known among them, speaks of both form and content as of equal merit in poetry. Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa and Vidyānātha, two later writers on similar topics, have contributed much information each. Vāmana, an immediate successor to Bhāmaha, says that poetry represents everything wholesome and beautiful. A much later critic called Paṇḍita Rāja Jagan-nātha, who lived during the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan's reign, expresses his partiality for beauty and richness of language alone as distinguishing poetic merit in a piece.

II.—THE SOUL OF POETRY

Writers have defined poetry and differed not a little among themselves about its essential feature, namely, the Soul of Poetry (*Kāvya Ātman*). We all know how the law of natural inclinations in human beings induces them to like or to reject a thing according as it pleases or displeases them. Certainly when we classify righteous acts and their opposites, the same kind of measuring rod may be employed. When we praise the great Rāma

for his implicit sense of duty in carrying out his father's behest, we at the same time reprehend Parasurāma for obeying his father's command and killing his own mother. Do we not perceive, then, that the measure of criticism of the two acts is our own susceptibility to the sense of right and wrong according to our own notions? Well, in order to help humanity in judging of actions, our ancients followed a golden rule. According to them, man is born only to discover his soul. Anything in what he does, if it reflects his soul within, becomes the right kind of action. The soul being a synonym for colourlessness and purity, its reflection in what one does account for the act itself being claimed as righteous or Dhārmic. Therefore, we need not hesitate to call an act that avoids revelation of the soul within a wrong act. So much so that, in the place of our own reactions to things forming a scale to measure the right and the wrong, we substitute the degree to which the soul of one is reflected in a thing as a measure of the extent of the rightness or the wrongness of that action.

From this we can judge of what our ancients considered the true function of poetry. Poetry to rank high should mirror the purest thought. The standard scale of their measurement of good and bad might appear to us today as of an extreme type. We may not be disposed to dispense with, as valueless, what the poets of the world have unequivocally imparted to us, through their own personal experiences. But neither can we neglect some of the useful theories of poetics developed by our ancients.

We know that the form of poetry is often compared

to the body or the vesture; and its sentiment, to the soul within. Figures of speech, imagery and the like are employed to deck the body. But do we need persuasion to come to the view that, however attractive the body or its adornments, without life within it, it cannot evoke real attention from us at all? On the other hand, however ungainly the appearance may be, if the soul within is all right, people do not totally avoid a person. Some genuine persons there may be who may even like such a man for his inner qualities alone and associate with him in spite of his repelling features. In the same way might poetic sentiment within a piece appeals to readers. Sometimes the folds of fancy and imagery might be so excessively laid upon it as to conceal the true nature of the sentiment within. In such an instance, the composition cannot be ranked with the highest in poetry.

Therefore we can conclude that *Kāvya Ātman* alone saves poetry from being degraded as a piece of sheer exercise in writing. That which is important in poetry is equated, therefore, with *Kāvya Ātman* or the Soul of Poetry. Of course in defining exactly what constitutes the soul of poetry, many writers have advanced individual theories, and confusions also are likely to arise from such mutually contradictory schools of thought.

III.—THE SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Among early writers on poetics Bhāmaha never even struck upon anything like a conception of the soul of poetry. In his work, *Kāvya-lāṅkāra Saṅgraha*, he only stresses form and matter well-matched in order to make poetry effective. Further, he deems ornate writing

alone as the most essential part of poetry. Others, trying to explain Bhāmaha, went to the extent of proving Bhāmaha's denial of anything like a soul in poetry, so much so, he became known as *Kāvya Cārvāka* or an Agnostic in poetry.

Daṇḍin made out in his *Kāvyaadarśa* that *Guṇa* or quality alone was responsible for poetry being deemed of merit. He, in support of his theory, distinguished style, apart from mere expressions or language, as of primary concern in poetry. He classified, therefore, style in Sanskrit into two types, the *Gauḍī* type and the *Vaidarbhī* variety. Of the two, the *Vaidarbhī* style embraces attributes like simplicity, perspicuity, sweetness, elegance, etc. The other one implies ruggedness, sophistication, unnatural effects, obscurantism and the like. Again, Daṇḍin asserted that the Southerners alone possessed proper style because of the *Vaidarbhī* style they followed. On account of his stress on *Guṇa* or quality he earned the name of *Guṇātma Vādin* or advocate of quality. Perhaps Daṇḍin too did not have a clear conception of anything like *Kāvya Ātman* as distinct from style.

Vāmana's *Sūtras* contain elaborate discussions, though the outcome of them all points to his view of style as of primary importance in poetry. In this he had no difference with Daṇḍin. He even added a third variety in style called *Pāncālī* to the two which Daṇḍin had mentioned. Unlike Daṇḍin he made specific mention of the existence of a factor called the Soul of Poetry.

Much confusion in thought prevailed for some time regarding this most essential factor in poetry till we

come to Ānanda Vardhana, the exemplar of the true path to an understanding of poetic merit. In his famous book *Dhvanyāloka*, he evolved the philosophy of genuine appreciation of poetry and his method, like that of Śaṅkara in his development of Advaitic thought, lends room for all the various schools of thought receiving recognition as but forming steps in the process of a search leading to *Rasa-Dhvani* or emotional suggestion as of the greatest import in any piece of literature.

Ordinarily, we know, more meaning is not sought in words than is apparent. But in poetry alone words achieve for themselves greater significance. Indeed, if a poem does not bear our penetration in search of an inner suggestion, it easily strikes us as shallow. The greater the number of suggestions which a piece of poetry discloses to a discerning mind, the greater its value and literary merit. True also that a natural or simple interpretation alone will receive general approbation from readers. But at the same time we should not forget that a master-artist does not merely employ words with restricted meaning and relevant to the particular context alone. He may choose such expressions as would glow with many tints satisfying a *rasika's* keen eye. Sometimes words should have to be weighed for their significance in their context alone. Ānanda Vardhana, therefore, remarks that the particular application of words in a specific context may raise the *Dhvani* or suggestion proper. He realized suggestion or *Dhvani* alone as of highest merit in poetry.

Suggestion makes the mind of a lover of art fill with ineffable joy. No doubt *rasa* itself is sufficient to make a reader's mind derive pleasure from poetry.

Indeed, many a later writer too dilated upon *rasa* or æsthetic pleasure as providing everything to make a reader happy. Ānanda Vardhana's theory does not contradict this argument at all. But he made further researches into the why and wherefore of æsthetic pleasure which, according to him, culminate in *Rasa-Dhvani* or æsthetic suggestion.

Suggestion itself may provide pleasure of an æsthetic type in two ways. Either it may be normal as when a *rasika* is slowly led to sufficient enjoyment or it may be of the intense variety whereby the reader is at once made one with the writer, finding intense and quick enjoyment in what defies expression or explanation. It is said by Ānanda Vardhana that the Goddess Sarasvati fulfils herself when the artist and the art-lover meet in such unison of feeling. Kuntaka, a contemporary of Abhinavagupta, wrote a thesis entitled *Vakroktijivita* wherein he defended *Vakrokti* or sheer artifice alone as a contributory cause of æsthetic pleasure. "*Vakrokti*" means that which is not expressed directly but is curved or roundabout in manner. According to its author, language devoid of unexpected turns and deflections can never fill the hearts of *rasikas* with adequate satisfaction. Mañkhaka, another informed writer, referring to Kuntaka said that *Vakrokti* or artifice in language, if at all it was to be employed, should emulate the curve of the crescent moon and not ape the shape of the dog's tail. Kuntaka further felt that *Vakrokti* should not stop with its application to language alone, but should be extended to the thought as well. Thus his classification of *Vakrokti* is of such kinds as word-artifice, sentence-artifice, etc. His conclusion would point to

Vakrokti as the Soul of Poetry.

Kṣemendra, a critic living in the 12th century after Christ, started his theory of appropriateness as of primary importance in poetry. In his work, *Aucitya Vicāra Carcā*, he elaborates the principles of appropriateness of language with adequate illustrations. Appropriateness in all respects, in sentiment, in language, in thought, etc., should be observed. Otherwise, according to him, the quality of poetry would be deficient.

No doubt appropriateness is an essential quality in literature and Ānanda Vardhana has not ignored it at all. But he would only place it along with other contributory causes to a poetic piece achieving perfection of form, though for the soul he would seek elsewhere, i.e., in æsthetic suggestion.

IV.—THE RASA THEORY

Coming to the *Rasa* theory proper, we must understand that one section of writers on Poetics always equated the Soul of Poetry and *rasa*. At any rate the latter received prominent recognition among the ingredients of good poetry. Others, who did not have a clear perspective of the *rasa* conception gave it at least equal rank with *alaṅkāras*. Perhaps to modern students, the theory of *rasa* may seem far-fetched, because of the absence of any such conception in any of the other literatures of the world. The reason is, Sanskritists, accustomed to a scientific interpretation of every subject they handled, made a deep and thorough analysis of our emotional reactions to literature. Nevertheless, for literary minds soaked in Western thought and literature, it will be hard to find justification for the

factor of *rasa* alone being of vital importance to enjoyment of poetry and not the well-known other causes like characterization, excellence of conceit, skill in plot, etc. Further, to multiply *rasa* or enjoyment itself into 8 or 9 varieties and to choose them as motifs or sentiments for plays or stories might seem more and more a hide-bound or stereotyped method for any one to follow in writing.

Defining *rasa* itself, it cannot form the subject of skill or artistry of a writer. On the other hand, enjoyment which we derive from literature is given the name of *rasa*. If enjoyment is *rasa*, then it passes one's comprehension how it could permit of varieties like *Śṛṅgāra* (love), *Karuṇa* (pathos), *Hāsyā* (humour), etc. If *rasa* is something akin to our enjoyment when we witness a play or participate in a feast it is natural for us to doubt its permitting of varieties or kinds. Aestheticians have been aware of this argument and they have confessed to the indefinable nature of an experience similar to *Ānanda* or bliss resulting from reading literature also, though they have analyzed it and found that it could be resulting in 9 different ways from mental reactions to sentiments. Further, they have found that all such reactions of the mind are subject only to any one of these 9 facets of the same single experience.

Bhāmaha included *Rasavat Alaṅkāra* as one of the figures of speech familiar to Sanskrit writing. Rather he confounded *rasa* as an *alaṅkāra* proper when he included it in that category. But much knowledge has been gained since Bhāmaha, and writers on poetics have concluded that *rasa* is not the same as, for instance, a

description of a flowing river or a snow-capped peak—objects in nature to be visualized.

Daṇḍin showed greater perception of *rasa*, though he too did not separate it from the category of accessories enhancing the body or form of poetry.

Vāmana, Kuntaka and Kṣemendra too did not realize the full significance of æsthetic pleasure as of surpassing concern to poetry.

Rasa in the simple connotation of the word signifies relish or taste. In relation to poetry we can understand taste as that born of our mental powers. From taste we can conclude that both the subject of taste and the resulting enjoyment are alike sweet in our memory. We realize also that nothing which gives no good taste can be enjoyed. It follows, therefore, that unless a thing is tasteful, it cannot be retained in memory. Two things clearly emerge from this: (1) the thing enjoyed and (2) the sensation of pleasure emanating from the act of tasting. The æsthetic satisfaction which results from this process of tasting is called *rasa*. The objects of enjoyment often vary. The persons enjoying also differ in their capacities. Again, one and the same person may evince different tastes. Poetry's true function is to supply all such readers with varied sensations of pleasure.

The next step in the theory of *rasa* is that there should be some kind of contact taking place between the mind that is prepared to enjoy and the object of enjoyment. This connection or attachment to objects is sometimes born of vague longing of a previous birth. If it were not so, we cannot be at a loss to explain why, when an art like music is said to be universal in its

appeal, there are some who are really immune to its influence. Again, but for the *Vāsanā* or continuity of experience from a previous birth, we may not be able to account for the germs of profound knowledge of music found in a child of tender years without either initiation or regular training received by it.

Rasa is classified into 9 kinds like love, indignation, heroism, awe, disgust, pathos, wonder, humour and serenity. For these full-fledged sentiments, the permanent background of moods required in the individual are desire, anger, endeavour, fear, disgust, sorrow, wonder, humour and calmness, respectively. These permanent conditions or moods of the mind are known as *Sihāyī Bhāvas* or staying moods.

Let us now explain the process of the emergence of *rasa*. Desire when it seeks expression depends upon certain accessory acts to help it. A lover's passion for his sweetheart as a piece of information does not move the readers to any emotional response. But certainly when such love is vivified in a number of incidents portraying its longings and languishings, at once a sympathetic chord in the reader's heart is struck. No doubt the accessory moods may appear and disappear with equal rapidity and finally merge in that state of mind which originally was found permanent in him. If a lover is exasperated in finding himself frustrated in his love affair, he may not be for ever found in that state of wretchedness. On the other hand, he will lose it either on his achieving what he wants or on total frustration.

Again, what we enjoy in life is not the same that we enjoy in literature. It is a fact that even ordinary

details of life when narrated in a book assume greater attraction. Some of our experiences in life, when translated into writing, get released from their personal aspect and receive the literary touch. *Rasa* for instance is not the same as our personal experiences in life of any of the sentiments like sorrow, joy, humour, etc. If we witness a wrestling match and derive pleasure from it, it is not exactly what we experience from a description of the same match in the pages of a book. Indeed *rasa* is the appellation we give to the latter and thereby distinguish it from the experience of an occurrence in actual life.

Turning to the accessory moods helping the fullness of *rasa*, we have already become familiar with the necessity for these to enrich the enjoyment we propose to get from literature. An illustration alone can clarify the point. Let us take the enmity of Duryodhana and Bhīmasena from the historic epic, the *Mahābhārata*. We know Duryodhana was born with jealousy of his stalwart cousin and that from the start he tried to do away with his life. Bhīmasena also never forgave his uncle's son for what he tried to do to him. Incidents like his setting on fire of a building where the Pāṇḍavās slept, his poisoning of Bhīma's food, his engaging the brothers in dice-play and humiliating Draupadī, their Queen, before an assembly of the *élite* were all contributory causes for Bhīmasena's indignation. Bhīmasena glowed with ire increasing every minute. His brother Yudhiṣṭhira counselled Bhīma to be calm and controlled of feelings. In the final scene Bhīma's anger got out of control, when he slew his enemy with his mace and smeared his palms with the blood gushing forth from

the slain body. Analyzing the main sentiment of a play representing this episode, heroism is the *rasa* mainly portrayed in the drama. The stages by which the sentiment receives strength may be described thus: Duryodhana happens to be the cause of Bhīma's provocation. His enemy is technically the *Ālambana kāraṇa* of the play. Next occur various minor incidents of attempts on Bhīma's life by Duryodhana, which add strength to the rising flame of Bhīma's ire. They are technically named *Uddīpana Kāraṇas*. Bhīma's indignation is clearly indicated in his facial expressions such as the rolling of his eyes, the twisting of his moustache, etc., which technically earn the name of *Anubhāvas*. Further, Bhīma's feelings receive a temporary set-back by his own brother's strong advice to be calm, and when Bhīma expresses his frustrated state of mind in words of despair and gesticulations of thwarted progress, the indications go by the name of *Vyabhicāri Bhāvas*. The final overcoming of the obstacles in his way, resulting in the crowning act of Bhīma's killing his foe, concludes the play, leaving the taste of heroism or *Vīra Rasa* in our minds. The *rasānubhava* finds the reader immersed in it. Bharata in his justly famed *Nāṭya Śāstra*, describes these accessory moods as of essential value in portraying *rasa*. Both the artist who creates the *rasa* for the reader and the art-lover who prepares himself for receiving the joy of realizing the purpose of art would certainly be recognized as indispensable to each other if the theory of *rasa* were to establish itself as of vital importance in all literatures.

The *rasa* discussion has become the main preoccupation of a group of writers who began dissecting the

cause and effect of *rasa*. All have tried to base their speculations upon Bharata's text alone. Some of them, at least, deserve specific mention here, though the limits set to this book make it impossible to refer to them more than very briefly.

Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa is a name to be honoured in this group for his interesting arguments to prove how the actors in a play cannot discharge their functions perfectly without their being permeated with the main sentiment portrayed in the play. Next in order comes the name of Śrī Saṅkuka, whose theory postulated the necessary preparation of a beholder of a drama with experiences in his own life similar to those portrayed in a dramatic piece for his own full enjoyment. Without personal experience one can hardly rise equal to a proper appreciation of incidents portrayed in literature. *Rasāmbhava* (Enjoyment) is, according to him, a matter for inference from the way emotions are portrayed by actors on the stage. Mahima Bhaṭṭa, a later writer, clarifies Śrī Saṅkuka's ideas.

Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka is another distinguished name in this category of writers, who in his *Hṛdaya Darpaṇa*, a book not available now, gave expression to what he conceived of as the correct approach to the *rasa* theory. What writers have outlined as his theory is what has been gathered of his views from various references to him in later writers. His theory insisted upon the human qualities portrayed in a play as the preliminary aid to real appreciation from the audience. The necessary aids for creating sympathy in the audience, according to him, should loom large in the estimation of a dramatist. The more the scope for identification of the audience

with the characters on the stage, the greater, according to him, will be the excellence or success of the sentiment developed or portrayed.

Then comes Abhinava Gupta, one of the greatest thinkers in the field. Living towards the close of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century, he did splendid services to literary criticism by his valuable treatises or commentaries on the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānanda Vardhana and on Bharata's book on Dancing. According to him, a *rasika* becomes impersonal from the moment of his preparation to enjoy a piece of art. Both tragedy and comedy affect him in the same way as only pleasurable feelings. He cares only for the resultant pleasure from the art of the dramatist and the skill of the actors in the presentation. Paṇḍita Jagannātha criticised Abhinava Gupta and expressed *rasa* as of the *rasikā's* own making and never the result of the dramatic performance.

In the result, we have many writers discussing the same topic, though Paṇḍita Rāja Jagannātha is supposed to be the last of such authoritative text writers known to Sanskrit students.

V.—ALANKARAS AND THEIR AIM

It is a matter of common knowledge among students of Sanskrit that all books dealing with poetics or æsthetics usually attract the name of *Alaṅkāra Śāstra*. To prove further the general impression of a *Śāstra* which the subject has gained from early times, we need refer only to the very names of books upon poetics like *Kāvya Mīmāṃsā*, *Kāvyaāloka*, *Sāhitya Mīmāṃsā*, etc.

But none can escape the feeling on a survey of the

entire field of *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* that all things connected with poetics or æsthetics have not been exhausted by the treatises of *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* so far existing. Nevertheless, earlier men in the field pointed to all such knowledge as would equip one in poetics as being available from the *Alaṅkāra Śāstra*. True also, there was no necessity or justification for all such knowledge on poetics being included in the category of *Alaṅkāras*.

What exactly writers on poetics did was to show or explain the meaning of poetic expression. In doing so, certain sanctions for literary writing or craft became also indispensable knowledge for persons learning to write. Canons of taste and standards of writing to guide the amateurs, soon began to receive careful treatment from them. The result was that information as to the type of a hero for a drama and a story, the kind of description needed, the sentiment to be portrayed in a play and other such matters pertaining to dialogues and figures of speech were discussed by writers. No beginner or novice in writing need fear the absence of models for training himself upon. At any rate none can go astray or reach the brink of a precipice, if only he has taken adequate precautions from what these masters had taught him or warned him against. Indeed, unlike the other literatures of the world, in Sanskrit alone there are enough guides to be of timely help to fresh entrants into the field of literary writing.

The further question is possible, why or for what should there be so much information about the manner of writing? Does *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* supply also the writer's craving for appreciation and his desire for recognition in getting discussed? Well, at once we can

say, the *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* never attempted any such thing as what we associate with the literary criticism of modern times, where writers and their books alone receive the critic's penetrative glance and dissecting pen. On the other hand, Sanskrit works which enunciated the correct standards and defined the boundaries against defective writing, more or less forced the beginner to pursue the trodden path made secure and safe against all imaginable difficulties. Even to those who will argue that correctives and safe counsel can be derived from proper examples chosen from among writers and that there is no need for making literary craft so hide-bound with guides and regulations, the explanation can always be profitably supplied, that, if once for all correct standards and useful precautions are laid down, there may be no future occasion for any writer to lose self-confidence within certain limits or to feel impatient for recognition or of criticism from others.

Moreover, even standard writers may not escape criticism in this method of exposing the foibles or defects in literary writing in general. Thus the love scenes and amorous acts of Śiva and Pārvatī described by Kālidāsa in the 8th canto of his *Kumāra Sambhava* came in for condemnation at the hands of no less a critic than Ānanda Vardhana. He disapproved of the passages describing the love-sports between the Godly pair as violating our sense of veneration for the Universal Parents. This is an instance to prove the inviolable standards which sometimes *Ālaṅkārikas* set up for writers to follow. Sometimes limits were marked out for the soaring fancies of writers. No doubt they were not unaware of the unrestricted scope for imagination

there should be in any kind of literary writing. But at the same time wildness of fancy and coarseness in thought were never to be permitted.

Our minds, steeped in Western literature, cannot today look upon these rules but as restraints on writers and trammels forged to make them narrow of vision and stale of thought. Reflecting more, however, we cannot but find our ancients were never for anything so very objectionable as that. If at all they erred in anything, it was in their anxiety to see none in taking to writing thereby courting fatal ignominy or lasting shame. They raised, perhaps, in this attempt the banks between which imagination should run, and raised them a bit higher too, in order to secure the vast fields of fertility around against getting completely devastated in a season of unusual freshets or flood.

Otherwise there are always ample evidences of the high-water mark reached by our writers in all branches of literary draughtsmanship. Instances can be piled up by way of enumerating the peaks of artistic excellence and creative imagination touched by some of the writers in Sanskrit. At the same time we cannot ignore the very wide extent of Sanskrit literature and its long history which are enough to justify instances also of bad as well as indifferent writers crowding the field. For that matter, no literature in the world can be free of unworthy examples and unpardonable freaks among its writers.

VI.—WORKS IN ALANKARA SASTRA

Alaṅkāra is an interesting branch of study to Sanskritists, for there are innumerable books on the

subject from the 6th century after Christ up to almost the present day. It will be a vain effort to survey all of these here, nor is it necessary even, considering the slight contribution that some of them gave to the subject. Save certain of the most important of them the rest can be left out in a short account.

KAVYALANKARA OR BHAMAHALANKARA. This is the book on poetics written by Bhāmaha, almost the first among known writers who attempted to expand and classify the *alaṅkāras* dealt with in Bharata's work called *Nāṭya Śāstra*. The development into a number of *alaṅkāras* of what Bharata first gave the world of æsthetics in the form of four kinds only, namely, *upamā* or simile, *rūpaka* or metaphor, *dīpaka* or illumination and *yamaka* or alliteration, was taken up by this writer. He is supposed to have lived about the 7th century. This work attracted another writer's attention and the result was a commentary on this from Udbhaṭa.

KAVYADARSA. This famous work of Daṇḍin (between 6th and 7th centuries) claims the serious study of all lovers of literary criticism. Some view the work as being composed of three chapters only, while others take it to contain four. The first chapter deals with attributes of poetic form, or *guṇās*, as they are known; the second with *alaṅkāras* proper. Again, this is divided into the two divisions of *Śabdālaṅkāra* or those depending on sound only and *Arthālaṅkāra* or those depending upon sense. The final portion deals with the defects likely in poetic writing and the way to avoid them. His method of classification has neither precedent nor following in the long list of works upon poetics. The further merit of the work lies in its easy reading and

enjoyable versification.

KAVYA-LANKARA SUTRA AND ALANKARA SUTRA
VṚTTI. These belong to Vāmana (early 9th century). The author is said to have graced the court of Jayāpīḍa of Kashmir, who reigned towards the end of the 8th and at the beginning of the 9th century. The peculiarity of this work is the list of words appropriate for poetic language given in the last section. Also, certain rules of grammar receive fresh interpretation at this writer's hands. The *Kāvya-lankāra Saṅgraha* of Udbhaṭa who also graced Jayāpīḍa's court, added more *alankāras* to the list of Bhāmaha. The result is, we get forty-one of them in this work. The author's other writing, namely, *Kumāra Sambhava*, a poem, supplies appropriate illustrations to his own classification of *alankāras*. An elaborate commentary on this work written by Pratīhārendu Rāja is also extant.

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The 9th century claimed two important writers in Bharata whose treatise on Dancing was called *Lollaṭa* and Śrī Śaṅkuka whose works are not available, though their theories are familiar to writers on æsthetics because of the constant reference to these theories in other early works.

DHVANYALOKA. This work of Ānanda Vardhana (9th century) is really more famous than others, for it established an unshakable school of thought about *Rasa-dhvani*. He starts with making out a case for suggestion in poetry in his first *Uḍyota* or chapter. In the second chapter, suggestions undergo classification. In the third, agents of suggestion claim his attention. Finally he finishes with showing the scope for fresh writing in the

field of literature. His principles are in practice among writers. Avanti Varman was the ruler whose court had the pride of possessing this great æsthetician.

HRDAYA DARPANA. This is a work on literary criticism by Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka (9th century). Though the book is lost to us, evidence is borne to it by other works referring to the principles enunciated by the author in his work.

KAVYA MIMAMSA. This is an interesting work, by Rāja Śekhara (10th century) in which Kavya Purusha, the son of the Goddess Sarasvatī is said to have married a maiden named Sāhitya Vidyā or Oumeyī. They travel to countries like Pāñcāla, Vidarbha, Avantī, Lāṭa, etc., and for a time they sojourn there, putting on the costumes peculiar to the country visited. The language in which the work is couched is said to resemble that of the *Mahābhāṣya*. Kṣemendra, Bhoja, Hemacandra and others have invariably drawn upon this mine of information for illustrating their own points.

SRNGARA TILAKA AND KAVYA-LANKARA. These works of Rudrata (9th century) claim our attention next in rank of merit. They are not generally deemed of a very high order, though the former work has enjoyed a commentary called *Rāsataranṅinī* by another writer.

DASARUPAKA. This work of Dhanañjaya (10th century), who lived at the court of Muñja of Dhāra, has a claim on more than ordinary recognition from writers, as it deals specially with the knowledge necessary for writing dramas.

LOCANA. Written by Abhinavagupta (10th century), this is a work of importance in this list, for it is an exhaustive commentary on Ānanda Vardhana's

Dhvanyāloka. The same author's other important work called *Abhinava Bhārati* is a commentary on Bharatā's *Nāṭya Śāstra*. Abhinavagupta condemned earlier writers like Śrī Śaṅkuka, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and others and established the theory of suggestion in poetry much more strongly than Ānanda Vardhana. He has referred to a previous commentary on *Dhvanyāloka* called *Candrikā*. The *Kāvya Kautukam* of Bhaṭṭa Tanta, though referred to by Abhinavagupta is not traceable at all.

ŚRĠGARA PRAKASA. Bhoja (10th century) is the author of this work, which contains thirty-six chapters of which the last twenty-four are devoted to the theory of *rasa*. *Śrīngāra*, according to him, is the only sentiment worthy of portrayal and the rest of the *rasas* can only appear as but shadows of the substance of *Śrīngāra*. He speaks of the arrangements, quality and defects of style, the definition of Mahā Kāvyaś and dramas etc. His work certainly covers a vast compass. *Sarasvatī Kaṇṭhābharaṇa* is from the pen of the same author, dealing with poetics.

AUCITYA VICARA CARCA. Written by Kṣemendra (12th century). This is a work that cannot be omitted, for it makes a special subject of appropriateness as the soul of poetry.

VAKROKTI JIVITA. Kuntaka (10th and 11th centuries) takes up in this work artifice of language as of greater importance, embracing within its scope even *Dhvani* or suggestion.

VYAKTI VIVEKA. This work of Mahima Bhaṭṭa (11th century) is chiefly devoted to condemnation of the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānanda Vardhana. Inference from language, according to him, can adequately represent

what is said to result from *Dhvani* or suggestion. Being a great logician himself, his theme bears marks of acute argumentative powers.

KAVYA PRAKASA. Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa (1100 A.D.) gives here an orthodox elucidation of the theories contained in *Dhvanyāloka* and *Locana*. Śrī Śaṅkuka, Mahima Bhaṭṭa and others receive his scathing criticism of their favourite theories. The textual portion of his work bears the name of *Alaṅkāra Sūtras*, traced by some to Bharata himself. The story current is that he was so renowned that the ruler of Kashmir, at whose court he flourished, awarded the title of *Mahāmahopādhyāya* to all those who came forward to write elucidations of this author's *magnum opus*. The result is that we have commentaries, nearly fifty in number, on this single work.

ALANKARA SARVASVA. This belongs to Ruyyaka (1100 A.D.) who is said to have flourished in the reign of Jaya Simha.

KAVYANUSASANAM. Hemacandra (11th and 12th centuries) here provides us a good collection of all earlier knowledge upon the subject of poetics.

VAKBHATALANKARA. This work of Vākḥaṭa (12th century) is also a book dealing with poetics. Another work of the same name of

KAVYANUSASANAM by another Vākḥaṭa of a later period (i. e., the 13th century) is also to be noted.

CANDRALOKA. Jayadeva (between the 12th and the 14th centuries) in this work supplies us a longer list of *alaṅkāras*, numbering nearly a hundred.

PRATAPA RUDRIYAM or PRATAPA RUDRA YASOBHUSANAM. This treatise by Vidyānāth (13th century) is a beautiful and authoritative piece of writing. In

the course of it a drama also is inserted, relating to the ruler Pratāpa Rudra of Orangal. All the verses written for illustrating the points are in praise of the ruler.

EKAVALI. Written by Vidyādhara (13th century), this follows entirely *Pratāpa Rudriyam* in its plan. Mallinātha, the famous commentator on many great poets, has written a commentary on this work, thereby enhancing its value to students of Sanskrit Literature.

SAHITYA DARPAṆA. Visvanatha (14th century) here propounds the theories of Mammaṭa, Abhinavagupta and others, making out *rasa* as of life-giving importance to poetry. *Darpaṇa*, another work belonging to him, deals with Mammaṭa's *Kāvya Prakāśa*.

RASARNAVA SUDHAKARA. This treatise of Simha Bhūpāla (14th century) is a good work.

RASAMANJARI AND RASA TARANGINI. Bhānudatta (14th century) is the author of these interesting studies on poetics.

KUVALAYANANDA. Appayya Dikṣita (16th century) of the South has written here a more amplified commentary on Jayadeva's *Candrāloka*, for he has supplied more points of illustrations as well as more varieties of *alaṅkāras* themselves. His style is of argumentative quality. His other work *Citra Mīmāṃsā*, though incomplete, as it stops with *Alīśayokti Alaṅkāra*, is also a famous work.

KAVYA PRADIPA. This work by Govinda (17th century) is another important milestone in the progress of knowledge on poetics. Earlier works like the *Sāhitya Kaumudī* of Vidyā Bhūṣan (15th century) and the *Alaṅkāra Kaustubha* of Kavi Karṇa Pūra (16th century) are not to be forgotten in this context.

RASA GANGADHARA. Paṇḍitarāja Jagannātha, the author of this work, who belonged to Shah Jehan's court (17th century), established a new and interesting school of thought in *Alaṅkāra Śāstra*, and he severely criticised Appayya Dikṣita for his *Citra Mīmāṃsā*. He betrays marks of improper understanding of Appayya Dikṣita's mind. But he cannot be missed, for he reviews practically all earlier works and also has given shape to his own theories on poetics.

ALANKARA ŚĀSTRA VILASA. This work of Rāma-subbā Śāstrin of Tiruvisanallore (19th and 20th centuries) is one to be noticed by students. He condemns Vidyānātha's theories in his work.

UPA LOCANA. This is the commentary on *Dhvanyāloka* and *Locana* by Mahāmahopadhyaya S. Kuppaswāmi Śāstrin whose name stands really high among Sanskritists of the modern age. Only the first *Udyota* of the book has so far been printed. Other names too there are in the extensive field of *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* but, since they have not done much original thinking, it is not necessary to mention them in a short sketch like this.

VII.—ALANKARAS IN POETRY

It is a just criticism to say that the Sanskrit language alone in the world possesses more than enough of ornamentation. For, no other foreign language, however much it may admit of a variety of figures of speech, approaches Sanskrit in the limitless scope for multiplying or vivifying these. The Indian languages which owe much to Sanskrit's influence for everything, perhaps equally revel in such highly ornamented language.

Æstheticians have not contented themselves with

merely enumerating the *alaṅkāras*, but have made a fetish of them as sources of infinite shades in the meaning of ideas. Hence nearly 150 such *alaṅkāras* have received attention constantly from writers on poetics, though further emendations of the same and minor varieties also are available. The range of such adornments to language has been so nearly exhausted that it may prove really arduous today for any one to invent or discover a new form or variation of *alaṅkāras*. But in the same way as the other Śāstras have developed well-constructed thought pertaining to their subjects, *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* has enabled us to have deeper penetration into the ultimate purpose of literary writing itself.

The word "*alaṅkāra*" means an ornament or anything worn for enhancing the attractiveness of the wearer. Poetry, we have seen, has a form to boast of and a soul to endure long. And it is but natural for a poet to adopt all such artifices and means to convey his meaning more and more impressively. When ideas seek channels of expression in order to become more vivid, *alaṅkāras* are born. We can prove this by an illustration. If a poet is struck by the beauty of a woman and wants to signify all that he feels about her beauty, in one simile he succeeds in saying it thus: "Her face shone like the full moon." We find, on analysis of what exactly made us enjoy his language, that the simile, which is a figure of speech, gave the meaning a little more vividness than otherwise.

Again this vividness and picturesqueness in language assures us of the poet's effective handling of the subject. Even as a fine form looks more appealing to our eyes when properly dressed and adorned, so also good poetry

captivates our hearts when clothed in rich phraseology and decked with suitable *alaṅkāras*.

At the same time, no sin is involved in a writer's resorting to fewer figures of speech or to none at all. Unadorned language has its own peculiar effect upon us, and we become sensible, indeed, of the intense art that sometimes requires no embellishments to aid it. In that case the purpose of the writer is achieved equally well, and such unvarnished writing also receives a place in the estimation of writers on poetics and classifiers of *alaṅkāras*, who dub it distinctly *Svabhāvokti* or naturalness of expression.

From the above we derive material to say that *alaṅkāras* are not everything in poetry and there should be other factors as well to make it sustaining to the hearts of readers. As a matter of fact, sometimes real thought loses its merit when too much covered with drapery or embellishments. Instances also can be supplied of unwanted workmanship. Let us suppose the scene where Rāma and Sugrīva meet for the first time, and Sugrīva tries to console Rāma's anguish by showing him the ornaments of Sītā dropped on her way to Laṅkā. Maybe instead of comforting Rāma, the very sight of some of the jewels revive in Rāma's mind sad recollections. The situation tempts a good artist to employ all his skill in order to arouse in the readers many trains of thoughts. The real fact may also be that Rāma was indeed moved to dwell upon past events associated with Sītā by seeing her ornaments. Without resorting to such methods of impressing the scene full of pathos on the readers, if a writer should say that on beholding the heavy layer of dust settled on the jewels

the tears of Rāma coursed down as if to wash them, we should call the artifice adopted *Utprekṣā*. No doubt all may not feel a ready response in their hearts to such types of *alaṅkāras*. Instead of the reader's being allowed to sympathise with Rāma's plight, he may even be checked in his attempt to sympathise by this kind of artificiality in language. Let us not imagine from the foregoing illustration that the particular *alaṅkāra* of *Utprekṣā* always savours of too much artificiality. On the other hand, a writer's ability to handle the subject, or his indifference to it, accounts for a particular *alaṅkāra* gaining its due share of appreciation or losing its intrinsic beauty respectively.

If only we pause to evaluate the great aid which language receives from the employment of *alaṅkāras*, we may not complain of the frequency of *alaṅkāras* in Sanskrit. For example, we find a strong man described thus: "He is strong of body and limb. His size is such that none can encircle his frame with his arms. His strength also is quite in proportion to his girth and height." We may not be very much satisfied with this insipid description. Supposing, on seeing him, one says, "He is like Bhīmasena of old," we may find the simile leaving our minds better impressed with the man's proportions and strength. Again, if another were to exclaim, "He is Bhīma himself," the metaphor aids our mental powers in picturing the man in the shape and colour of what an epic character stands for in our impressions. If, further, any one should merely exclaim on seeing our friend, "Oh! Bhīma come again to earth!," such an *Atiśayokti* or exaggeration would heighten our pleasure of identifying the figure with one

known to us ineradicably as great of size and in prowess of arms. Well, no one of these three kinds of *alaṅkāras* can be said to be merely painting the lily or gilding the gold. For every figure of speech will have a special appeal to us in that the speed and intensity of our own response to it rises in proportion to the meaning of the artist getting more clarified by the picture created by the particular figure of speech.

VIII.—METRE

There are ever so many fallacies in our notions of what poetry is. Because of a thing getting into writing alone we entertain the charm of its literary appeal. We forget that life abounds in as many good things as poetry unravels. The chirping birds, the babbling rivulets and the prattling babes have no less attraction to us than lines of poetry describing them. Hence, to say that life is not quite so attractive as literature is totally wrong. But to one who has missed life's joys, literature contributes great comfort, just as to one who has forfeited the sweetness of friendship philosophy supplies satisfaction.

Another misconception which frequently finds quarter in educated minds too is the difference which they imagine between a line in verse and a non-metrical sentence. According to Sanskritists a *Kāvya* or poetic piece embraces both the verse-form and the prose-form of writing. The conceit alone supplies its identification with poetry and not the mere form. The only differentiation permitted is of metrical and non-metrical forms in a *Kāvya*.

Normally, poetry is imagined to bear the stamp of

metrical lines. That is also not correct; for very many technical subjects in Sanskrit have been written in metrical form and to imagine that they possess poetic merit of any order would be a most unprofitable assumption. On the other hand, non-metrical writing, in order to have real attraction, must have in it genuine poetical stuff. Otherwise, readers may not be easily drawn to it. Perhaps this was the reason for writers on poetics in our country making non-metrical writing almost a test for any one's competence as a good writer.

Chandas or rhythm is the movement generated and regulated by harmonious restrictions. Words are filled in the space between two such restrictions. Verse-form is completed when sound and sense happily blend in one and a thought suggestion is enshrined in it. When poetry in metrical form appears, the union of external and internal aspects of the self-same matter, of body and soul and of form and substance, becomes an accomplished thing. When thus words get into cadenced form, poetry is born with a radiance and a lilt.

About metre and its scope, there are a number of treatises in Sanskrit. Classifications of major metres and minor metres have also been made. Thus *Mātrā Vṛttas* and *Varṇa Vṛttas* indicate roughly major and minor difference in versification. The birth of metre depends largely upon the mood and mind of persons employing it.

Further, in Sanskrit, it is an agelong notion that a poet should be endowed with a long vision or foresight. His ken should take in much of what is yet to be perceptible to others. A poet is not for this reason consigned a place outside the pale of humanity. Everybody owns that a poet's mind only reflects the hopes

and strivings of the same humanity from whose ranks he has sprung. He does not merely copy, in his art, life's colours and incidents; he interprets them. His reactions to the world of life places him in different positions of vantage. If he idealises a picture that interprets things observed with insight, the result of his labours achieves the appellation of an *Uttama Kāvya* or ideal poem. If in his attempts to achieve the ideal he does not succeed fully but only to some extent, the work receives the name of a *Madhyama Kāvya* or a poem of moderate merit. It does not require much inducement to appreciate the best or the next best in literature. For they naturally attract more readers and wide recognition. In such a class can be placed poets of renown like Vālmīki, Vyāsa and Kālidāsa. Among the next best can be grouped poets like Aśvagoṣa, Bilhaṇa, Pravaraṣena, etc. Certainly more writers of Kāvyaas abound in Sanskrit literature, and they are filling up the ranks that have never been on the wane. No doubt they are also writers whose works provide readers with enough material and information upon subjects far and near. They often betray, however, much labour and but little of significant poetic merit in their writings.

We cannot ignore also the vanity of poetic gifts in all who woo the Muse. Either vanity drives them to pose as poets or ignorance of the genuine substance leads them astray to mistake mere fancies for solid thoughts. The mark of creativity which alone saves poetry from neglect or oblivion is not so easy of achievement. The select few, by the grace of God and by persistent chastening of the inner spirit, snatch the coveted prize of being called *Mahā Kavīs*.

Chapter VII

KĀVYAS (CONTINUED)

I.—ŚRAVYA (TO BE HEARD) AND DRSYA (TO BE SEEN) KAVYAS

Tradition in Sanskrit has laid upon writers certain injunctions to follow. Rules for composition cannot but deal mainly with particulars pertaining to the outward forms alone. Factors like the mood of the artist, his environment, his choice of theme and his poetic vision, cannot come under any strict regulation or rule, as they permit of no clear definition and proper standardization. Some of the well-known writers move us by the very power of their pens and we receive all that could be visualized by language. Such poems are deemed *Śravya Kāvya*s or poems to be heard.

Such a classification naturally evokes the ability of the writer to picture episodes and events to his readers in such a manner that they may not only feel the scenes which they cannot see but, stirred by their own imaginative powers, may very well visualize them. We are able to find such high-class *Śravya Kāvya*s in the great epics of this country, which are heard always with unflagging interest and unabating enthusiasm by vast crowds of listeners. Indeed, the more the listening

crowds get attracted to them, the greater the proof of their art preserving true imagination and picturesque delineation of characters.

The *Śravya Kāvya* generally adopts a narrative medium. But numerous dramatic situations get exploited with profit by the poet in this narration. The situations prove tense or moving only with their scope for dramatic development. In this context, the prologue of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, which is mistakenly deemed by some critics as an interpolation, shows us vividly what exactly a *Śravya Kāvya* should be like. It is said that the august assemblage, composed of King Rāmacandra himself and his court and containing great ones of the land as well as the subjects of the kingdom, was thrilled to the marrow of the bones listening to the narration of Rāma's exile and his return, sung by the twins Lava and Kuśa. The element of graphic detail and pictorial delineation, not to speak of the most ennobling situations themselves admitting of great dramatic treatment, cannot but have enraptured any earthly or heavenly audience.

Next come *Dṛśya Kāvya*s or poetic pieces to be seen. From the name itself it is clear that such a piece will leave a greater impression on persons than a *Śravya Kāvya*. Can we not, for instance, respond to a representation of the story of Hariścandra on the stage, more powerfully moved than by the mere narration of such a tragedy? But it will be indeed a mistake to conclude from this, that a drama is more quickly written or easier of achievement. In fact a playwright requires greater skill and more knowledge of all the other arts like the dance, music, painting, etc., in order to

succeed creditably in his undertaking. Moreover, the eye is more fastidious in its demand, so much so that in order to be of outstanding merit a drama needs all the greater imagination and creative skill of an artist to produce it to entire satisfaction. 'Great discipline in writing will be needed before one can become a dramatist of distinction. Special gifts, like the ability to employ dialogues of a simple and appropriate contrivance, skill in developing characterization and choice of real situations capable of enriching the main motif of the play are not acquired in a day. Sanskrit writers never deem a good dramatist as of equal rank with other writers. They give him a unique position because they consider the drama as a tougher job for normal persons to try and succeed in.

II.—PADYA (METRICAL) AND GADYA (NON-METRICAL) WRITING

Coming back to *Śravya Kāvya*, it admits of further classifications into *Padya* and *Gadya* (metrical and non-metrical) writings. Their features vary more in form than in substance.

Padya technically denotes a verse of four feet. *Gadya* has no such limitations. Though *Gadya* may look exactly like what we describe as prose-writing in other languages, *Gadya* in Sanskrit does not resemble prose in all its details. *Gadya* embodies musical cadences in the formation of sentences. The rhythmic element also distinguishes *Gadya* from what generally is known as prose. The *Gadya Kāvya*s in Sanskrit are not very many. But from this we should not conclude that there was a great paucity of writers of prose. The very fact

that prose did not claim much special merit or attract much attention from critics or in any way add distinction to a writer, can be a plausible reason for the existence of fewer writers in that branch. Moreover, certain other forms of writing in Sanskrit like *Danḍaka*, generally adopted in *stotra* literature, prove the want of the habit of clearly demarcating prose-writing from metrical form. *Danḍaka*, which appears in the form of *Vākyas* or sentences, has none-the-less a place among verse variations and the *Vṛtta Ratnākara* (Ocean of Metres) accords it such a place.

III.—MAHA KAVYAS (LONGER POEMS)

The Rāmāyaṇa—This epic is roughly estimated to be more than 2500 years old. But Indians always regard this poem as the earliest known. The very metre of *Anuṣṭubh* is said to have been first used by the great sage Vālmīki. The episode of the sage's heart getting moved to pity on seeing a bird pierced by the arrow of a hunter and his pent-up sorrows resolving into *Chandas* or metre are too well-known to require recapitulation. The *śloka* or verse that emanated from the lips of the sage condemning the hunter to a shortened life on account of his cruelty in killing the bird, made the sage himself wonder at its conformity to rhythm, musical quality and proportion in words. Nārada congratulated Vālmīki upon the gift of poetic composition that he had won by the grace of Brahma, the Creator. The introductory cantos of the *Rāmāyaṇa* give us this account of the birth of poetry, and none of the later poets in the unbroken chain of poets and bards of this land ever had reason to suspect its truth or authenticity.

Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti and a host of others like Bhoja, have all been much influenced by this episode of the birth of poetry found in the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Modern scholars are still uncertain as to which is the earlier of the two epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* or the *Mahābhārata*. Further, some of them are of opinion that the origin of poetic pieces should not be dated from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, for, according to them, earlier attempts at metrical compositions could be traced to other poets of the world. Let us not quarrel with anyone regarding the existence of earlier poems before the age of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Our main concern here, at any rate, is to evaluate its primacy among the existing poems in the Sanskrit language. The best of minds have not hesitated to accord Vālmīki a very high seat of honour among the galaxy of the world's renowned names in literature. For sheer ability in handling situations and for power of description and characterization, no other poet seems to come anywhere near Vālmīki. The simplicity of his style combined with dignity and pristine purity in the art of relating the story are still marvels of human endeavour in literary achievement. One particular feature compels our attention to this poem. There is no occasion in this long poem for either Rāma or Sītā to leave us. The poet always presents before us one of the two without ever forgetting to describe their features or their apparel. At the same time there is no room for us to obtain satiety in such descriptions; for they reveal touches of a master-artist in vivifying his portraits of men and women. Leaving Vālmīki's exemplary delineation of human character, we are no less confronted with wonder and deep appreciation of his

love of nature which easily exhibits itself in a thousand-fold detail of tree and foliage of the wilderness and the country-side. Birds and flowers with their variegated hues and distinct qualities appear before us, not to speak of the great flowing rivers or the mountain scenery in which he revels with joy. Battles are depicted with no little wealth of detail and realism. Despite most of them having been waged with the aid of the same weapons of branches of trees, boulders and arrows, we cannot fail to be impressed with other details that distinguish one from the other of those little skirmishes or even long-drawn out fights.

Vālmīki's similes are by themselves a fit study for any student of literature. The universality of their application make him dear to everyone of every clime and every language. His expansive heart and bright naturalness claim for him thousands of admirers the world over. Profound truths and philosophical observations are scattered throughout the poem. There is no room for any one's feeling that Vālmīki's art suffers from the preponderance of a particular set of ideas or impressions peculiar to him alone. Synthetic vision and self-integration of a unique order alone are responsible for the poet-sage's surprising the world with the flow of his ideas that, like the perennial waters of a river, seem lasting enough to reach the very ends of the world.

One other feature of Vālmīki's art deserves comment. If he idealizes a character, say like Rāma, he does not produce nausea in us by doing it with no necessary intervals for the same character to appear natural and human alike. To give a proof of an observa-

tion of this kind, when Vibhīṣaṇa first appears before Rāma, fresh in his indignation at Rāvaṇa and his court, Vālmīki does not forget to remind us of Vibhīṣaṇa of "fearful resolve and action." But when Vibhīṣaṇa helps Rāma with his knowledge of the strategems of Rāvaṇa and his own plans to counter them, the poet remembers to claim him as a "righteous soul." Every other character, great or small, in the epic is dealt with in the same manner, portraying qualities that look appropriate to the occasion or the context. The world with its teeming men, women and animals is mirrored in the pages of Vālmīki in all their naturalness and realism. But the purpose of the poem, namely the victory of righteousness over evils, is never lost sight of. Rāma, however human, never yields in a conflict without coming to a decision, but ever inspires hope in the hearts of his readers. The message of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is to prove to the world how, with only one aim always shining before us, *i. e.*, to follow what our elders have enjoined upon us as the right path, will inevitably take us to the proper goal in life. The poet, even in the opening lines of his masterpiece, seeks of Nārada an answer for only one question, namely, "Who is he that is powerful of arms, truthful of spirit, of righteous conduct and of earnest gratitude in life?" The long answer is unfolded in this poem of nearly twenty-four thousand verses.

We cannot pass on without referring to present-day criticism's questioning of the authorship of both the *Bālakāṇḍa* and the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. Even if we dismiss as sheer conformity to conservatism the strong belief in the authorship of Vālmīki testified to by poets like

Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti or scholars like Ānanda Vardhana and Abhinavagupta, still there may be no poetic justification for the rest of the long poem belonging to Vālmiki if either the *Bālakāṇḍa* or the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is felt to have been written by others. Plumbing the depths of a mind like Vālmiki's we cannot escape a feeling that if he has created Rāma as showing physical courage and heroism of a high type to save Sītā from Rāvaṇa's hands, he cannot refrain from revealing Rāma's greater strength of mind and spirit of sacrifice which alone must have prompted his yielding up Sītā to the forest for the sake of preserving an unsullied reputation and the highest conduct of life. It is easier to combat a foe who means harm to you physically than to show an unbending spirit to the enemy of self-interest within you. Moreover, to sacrifice the nearest and dearest of his own accord is indeed much greater and rarer in a man than to court suffering and strife to rescue or protect them.

All honour to Vālmiki for the creation of a character of the proportions of Śrī Rāmacandra. If poets hailing from different provinces of this country like Tulsīdās, Kamban, Ezuthachan and Bhāskaran have also composed *Rāmāyaṇas* in their respective languages of Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu, they only prove to the hilt how much they had admired Vālmiki's art. If both the educated and the uneducated of this land vie with one another in worshipping Rāma's name, we owe it in no small degree to the superior creative art that has produced a personality like Rāma. Indeed, if another such poet should ever be born in our midst again, we shall be only honouring him in the unique way we do Vālmiki.

The name of Rāma has become so sweet to the ear of both the devotee and the scholar in this country that in the matter of a strange belief in the spiritual efficacy of pronouncing the name itself, they are both identically of the same attitude of reverence. Even a suckling babe in this land on hearing Rāma's name would pause a bit in its eagerness to fill its mouth with its mother's milk.

The deification of Rāma by some has not prevented even minds educated in Western thought from appreciating the sterling qualities of this hero among men. On the other hand, some of our advanced minds in progressive thought have shown a master-bias leaning to the hero-worship of Rāma. Our own traditional thought also helps us in this. For we have always held that no individual can remain long in isolated, mental stagnation. Divinity, according to us, is an attribute of one in whom virtues preponderate. The contrary follows, namely, that if vices are found in much larger proportion in a man's make-up, he is readily ranked with a beast or a subhuman personality. Man's evolution, if it is to be on correct lines, will find him one day rising more and more above his failings and reaching a stage when his superiority over others will become manifest in the way in which he resolves all conflicts within. Our Vedānta doctrines and religious beliefs always point to this goal for man to reach. Hence no great effort of the mind is needed for those born of the great seers of this land to imagine Rāma as an avatāra or a personification of God.

Vālmīki is also said to have produced two other works called *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* and *Ānanda Rāmā-*

yaṇa. Sober opinion will brush aside this information as unconvincing, because of the lack of perfection in both the thought and the execution of these two works. The verses too betray a certain ungainly quality in that they resemble more the verses composed by writers of Śāstras.

ASVAGHOSA. (c. 1st century A.D.). He was a Buddhist and is said to have been originally a Hindu who became a convert to the new religion. He wrote the *Buddhacaritam* or Life of the Lord Buddha. His style is distinguished by perspicuity and sweetness. Much similarity will be visible between the kind of writing he indulges in and that of Kālidāsa of a later century. Indeed, to those who lack historical sense, the earlier poet might appear to have modelled his style upon Kālidāsa's.

The life of the Lord Buddha from his birth as a Prince in the royal household at Kapilavāstu to the great event of his life when he attains "Enlightenment" under the Bodhi tree is narrated with enough interesting details to draw our attention. Fine descriptions are numerous in this book. Certain passages wherein renunciation is defined and described are indeed of compelling beauty the like of which we cannot see anywhere else in Sanskrit literature. Love comes in for its share of delineation at the poet's hands when he relates the details of the harem of Prince Siddhārtha. No doubt the book cannot fail to impress any reader with the one prime motive actuating its author, namely, his zeal for the new religion of the Buddha.

Another long poem entitled *Saundaranandam* is also attributed to the same poet. The story briefly told

is nothing but the conquest of Buddhistic doctrines over a Prince called Nanda whose earlier years showed immense weakness for a life of sensuousness and indulgence.

BUDDHA GHOSACARYA. (Period uncertain). *Padya-cūdāmaṇi* is the name of the poem claiming its birth from this poet. The Buddha's life is again the subject here. But there are definite deviations in details which make Buddha Ghoṣa's book appear different from that of Aśvagoṣa in the treatment of the story itself. Lucidity and a certain naïveté mark this writer's style, though much food for thought can hardly be traced in him. He also shows immense capacity for graphic detail, and in the opening *Sarga* where King Śuddhodana and Queen Māyā are introduced, we get a sufficient number of passages of description. More engaging is the second *Sarga* of this book where Tuṣita, the Supreme Being, is worshipped by Devas. Many will begin to suspect from his language that he has taken Kālidāsa for his model.

ĀRYA SURĀ. *Jātaka Mālā* is the name of a work ascribed to this poet, dealing with the chronicles of some of the Buddha's disciples. The book is really of value to the followers of the Buddhistic religion. He too lived in the pre-Kālidāsa period.

NAGARJUNA, CANDRA GAURI, SANTI DEVA, ĀRYA DEVA, VASUBANDHU, etc. These were again some of the poets who lived in the pre-Kālidāsa age and were reputed for their works, though more cherished by Buddhists as supporting their religious thought.

KĀLIDASA (4th and 5th centuries). We then pass on to the prince among Indian poets, who stands almost equal in eminence to Vālmiki, the poet of poets. If the

Ādi Kavi wrote his longest poem in the form of an *Itihāsa*, Kālidāsa showed rare genius for compactness in lines and for illumination in thought. For he never so forgot himself as to be led away by his enthusiasm for versifying or to allow it to go to disproportionate lengths. No descriptive passages of abnormal size ever mar the effect of his crisp narrations. But, at the same time, he cannot be found fault with for omissions of any serious kind.

Again, he is not the poet to sacrifice the significance of an epithet or a suggestion in thought for the sake of sheer phraseology. His choice of subjects leaves one in no doubt of his unprecedented poetic art.

Both Westerners and Easterners have regarded Kālidāsa as a poet of extraordinary merit. The Oriental imagination has always attributed his poetic gifts of such rare quality to the special favour of the Goddess Kālī to him, while he was young and inexperienced. He is steeped in sweetness and love while betraying no strong weakness himself to either the one or the other. For noticeably his perceptions always maintained their extreme detachment from desires.

Among his celebrated works the *Raghuvamśa* claims our attention at once. Commencing from Dilīpa the Good, and ending with the ignominious Agnivarna, he has given us a long line of illustrious kings with such art in the narration, that, where expansion is necessary, he has not shown any indifference to the sense of completeness and where contraction would relieve us of the tedium, he has revealed the necessary economy of language and brevity of narration. Moreover, in *Raghuvamśa*, Kālidāsa for the first time chose an entire kingly line

for his theme, instead of anecdotes of a single king. It is indeed an innovation, a departure from existing regulations in poetics. But it proves at the same time how the truly great have struck out fresh paths for their genius to traverse. The race of Raghu, according to Kālidāsa, assumed great prominence from the time of Dilīpa reaching gradually the zenith of glory with Śrī Rāma and his progeny on the throne and declining slowly to get finally extinguished in Agnivarṇa's disgraceful reign. Some of the later kingly names of that line receive only a passing reference from the poet, because of their lack of prominence. In the last *Sarga* or canto the life of Agnivarṇa is painted in such deep colours as to remind one of the final flush of the evening sky before the sun of Raghu's race set.

Kumāra Sambhava is a poem for which Kālidāsa will ever remain young and fresh in our memories. The poet stopped with the eighth canto describing the union of Umā and Parameśvara. The later cantos cannot be his, both by reason of external and internal evidences. The birth of Kārtikeya or Senānī is the main purport of the poem bearing the title of *Kumāra Sambhava* or Birth of Kumāra. Further details of Kumāra's conquest of Tārakāsura are beside the poet's main purpose in writing the poem. The internal evidence to prove this view is more convincing in that none of Kālidāsa's admirers can feel ensnared by the poetic quality of the verses of the later cantos.

Critics are of the opinion that *Kumāra Sambhava* is really simpler than *Raghuvamśa*. For music in lines and chiselled expression, one cannot think of another classical poem equal to it. Further, the dramatic art is

pressed into service whenever a situation demands it. Every canto contains such dramatic situations and such graphic portrayal of characters that we cannot single out any one for special mention. But, all the same, one loves to dwell upon the glory that is Kālidāsa's art, when he describes the scene where Umā approaches Śiva after his meditation. Every bit of her personal charm and her raiment is faithfully detailed and every little movement in the tense situation awaiting Śivā's reciprocity to her boundless love are marvellously portrayed. One cannot fail to hear for long Rati's wail after the burning of Love by Śiva. Such sweet strains preserving sorrow's intense pain flow from Kālidāsa's pen that we easily confirm what an English poet wrote: "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts."

The further cantos of the *Kumāra Sambhava* are written in a manner which easily betray immature art. Evidently their author deemed Kālidāsa's work incomplete without the story being taken to the finish of the victory over Tāraka by Kumāra. One can also try to justify the poem as complete with the birth of Kumāra.

Kālidāsa is said to have graced the court of a king of the Gupta Dynasty in Indian history. Towards the extreme end of the 4th century after Christ, according to historical data, Kālidāsa is found adding fame to a ruler of that line, whose achievements in other fields were no less conspicuous than that of his bringing together poets and bards of renown at his court.

BHARAVI. (6th century). Bhāravi's name is pronounced always with great respect among the celebrated poets of India. On whatever he touched there is the stamp of his individuality. Tradition accords him

significance for the deep meaning inlaid in every one of his stanzas. He is supposed to have travelled from place to place for the sake of earning his livelihood. Kāñcī in the South is credited by some with having offered a home to this poet. There is also an inscription which mentions his name in a verse. Daṇḍin also in his *Avantisundarī* makes a reference to Bhāravi.

The poem which brought him fame is known by the name of *Kirātārjunīyam*. It has eighteen cantos. Commencing from the exile of the Pāṇḍava brothers to the Dvaita Forest the story has narrated all the incidents leading to the penance of Arjuna for winning the *Pāśu-pata Astra* from the God Maheśvara and the final fruition of his endeavours. In the second canto, which gives an account of the meeting of a secret council of war to prosecute plans to counter Duryodhana's stratagems, we have the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Bārhaspatya Daṇḍa Nīti* much drawn upon for information on statecraft and the methods of warfare by kings. The poet shows immense talents in portraying the seasons' change and mountain scenery. In all his writings we can trace the originality of his method. No doubt his thoughts lie deep and none but the more painstaking among readers can plumb their depth. One method of his which requires comment is his habit of linking up ideas in sequence, revealing a connected thought in their entirety. An example will not be out of place here. He writes:—

Without strength of arms troubles are sure to assail one; to one caught up in difficulties, no great future or hope can light the way; the world is likely to ignore a person with no future before him; such a person is sure to forfeit even a kingdom by such neglect of the world.

Another special mark of his writing is his habit of affixing the Goddess Lakṣmī's name to the concluding stanza of every canto. From this he earned another title as *Lakṣmyaṅka*.

Later poets have shown high regard for his name. One such, called Kṛṣṇa Kavi, in his *Bhārata Carita* pointedly refers to him with pride.

BHATTARA HARICANDRA. (5th or 6th century). Bāṇa praises this name in his *Harṣa Carita*. Apart from a well-known poem of his, some prose writings too claim his authorship. He must have belonged to the Jain sect. According to some, a poem written by him called *Dharmaśarmābhilyudāyam*, describing Dharmanātha's life, easily establishes his religious faith. He was himself conscious of his writings' brimming with *rasa*. Some of his verses are collected in anthologies for their beauty.

MENTHA. (6th century). Rājaśekhara praises Menṭha in his work. Further it is interesting to find Rājaśekhara grouping himself with Menṭha and Bhavabhūti and calling such a group of writers the true representatives of Vālmiki. A later poet named Maṅkha remarks that Menṭha along with Bhāravi, Bāṇa, Subandhu, etc., deserves fame. This poet wrote a poem of many cantos on Śrī Rāma's life. Another work of his called *Hayagrīvavadha* earned such appreciation from the ruling monarch of those times that he was asked to place it in a casket of gold for presentation.

KUMARA DASA. (6th century). A poem called *Jānakīharaṇam* claims him as its author. Throughout the twenty cantos of this book enough proofs of the author's conscious imitation of Kālidāsa can be traced. Even whole phrases and identical expressions peculiar to

Kālidāsa get themselves transplanted in this book. Still there is a peculiar musical quality in his language which does not fail to attract readers.

BHATTI (7th century). He wrote a poem called *Rāvaṇa Vadha*. The middle section of it is devoted to exploiting all the attributes of a *Kāvya* spoken of in *Alaṅkāra Śāstra*. Peculiarities of grammar also find ample scope in the latter part of his writing. Pāṇini's grammar needs no better illustration for the application of its rules than this work. The author himself refers to his native place as Valabhī and to the ruler of the place as Śrīdhara Sena.

BHAUMAKA. (7th century). *Rāvaṇārjunīyam* is the title of a poem from his pen. The story of the defeat of Rāvaṇa at the hands of Kārtavīryārjuna is magnified in this poem. Like Bhaṭṭi, this poet also shows an inclination to make too much use of grammatical peculiarities. Born as he was a Kashmerian, it is explicable why many in that country still look upon him with great veneration.

MAGHA. (9th century). He is said to have lived in a village lying between the tracts of Gūrjara and Mārwar. Literary critics like Ānanda Vardhana and Rājaśekhara allude to this poet in many places in their works. A certain commentator on *Kāvya Prakāśa* by name Bhīmasena, gives a revealing anecdote about Māgha. According to him, Māgha was a Vaiśya by birth, who falsely affixed his name to another's work, having purchased it from its author.

Śiśupālavadha is a long poem ascribed to him. The destruction of Śiśupāla at Lord Kṛṣṇa's hands forms the main incident of this narrative. The entire piece

strikes one as planned upon the *Kirātārjunīyam* of Bhāravi. As in Bhāravi, we have described here also a secret council of war. Again, here are found similar descriptions of the varying seasons and the mountain scenery. Even the shape and type of particular metres employed by Bhāravi have got their exact prototypes here. Sometimes even their order or sequence too remain copied here. Māgha further employs *śabdā-lanikāras* similar to those Bhāravi has used. Again, if Bhāravi uses the name of Lakṣmī as his stamp, Māgha uses Śrī in its place to finish off his cantos.

Mallinātha, the great commentator, enthusiastically surveys Māgha's grammatical usages, as he is himself a thorough student of grammar. Indeed, a certain story is current in literary circles that Mallinātha confided to one of his friends that he had spent usefully most of his time either in studying Māgha or *Megha* (meaning by the latter the *Meghasandēśa* of Kālidāsa). Further, there is a traditional belief that one conversant with Māgha even through the first nine cantos, can never be deficient in his knowledge of Sanskrit.

ŚIVASVAMIN. (9th century). *Kapphaṇābhyudāyam* is the title of a poem attributed to Śivasvāmin. Kapphaṇa was a king of Deccan who found a place in the heart of this poet. Kalhaṇa, the author of *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* or the chronicle of kings, places him in the court of Avantivarman, a ruler of the 9th century.

RATNAKARA. (9th century). *Haraviṇaya*, a poem expanded into fifty cantos, claims him as its author. Each of the cantos in turn abounds in more than hundred verses. *Utprekṣālanikāra* is the forte of this writer. *Yamaka* (alliteration) and *Śleṣa* (punning on

words) receive also his great attention. The story of the piece is that of Śiva's conquest over Andhakāsura, and the mighty preparations for the battle are detailed herein with gusto. Many honorifics are added to the name of this poet. *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* mentions him as belonging to Avantivarman's court.

ABHINANDA. (9th century). Two poets of this same name are said to have flourished. One of them lived in Kashmir and became the author of the story of *Kādambarī* in verse form, called *Kādambarī Kathā Sāram*.

ABHINANDA. (9th century). The other Abhinanda wrote a poem called *Rāmacaritam* in thirty-six cantos. Though this poem is enjoyable reading, its popularity is not appreciable. The King called Hāra Varṣa, whose court this poet graced, offered him a half seat on his throne in token of appreciation of his poetic talents. The poet in his work gratefully acknowledges the King's instrumentality for his wide recognition.

VASUDEVA. (9th century). He was born in a village in the neighbourhood of Anantaśayanam. He was reputed to be the author of three important works, *Yudhiṣṭhiravijayam*, *Śaurikathodayam* and *Tripura-dahanam*.

JINASENA. A Jain by religion, he wrote a book called *Pārśvabhūdaya Kāvya* or *Pārśvanātha Caritam*. He loved too well to imitate Kālidāsa's verses.

HALAYUDHA. (10th century). His work is called *Kavi Rahasyam*. He earned distinction for employing a number of verbal variations.

PADMA GUPTA. (10th and 11th centuries). He lived in Dhārā of old when the kings Muṇja and Bhoja

ruled over it. Of his books only one, called *Nava-Sāhasāṅka Caritam* is available. The story revolves round the hero and a maiden called Śaṣīprabhā whom he afterwards marries.

DHANANJAYA. (9th and 10th centuries). His poetical work was known as *Dvisandhānam* or *Rāghava Pāṇḍaviyam*. By the device of his language both the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* stories are discovered in the same verses. Though it is not possessed of much intrinsic quality, still readers can enjoy in this book ideas cleverly expressed.

ATULA. (11th century). A book named *Mūṣika Vamśam* was written by this poet. The origin of the Kerala country is the subject of this poem, though it much resembles a fable. Certain historical data also get enmeshed in this kind of writing and discriminating readers can easily separate facts from fable in the poem.

KSEMENDRA. (11th century). He was a well-known poet who graced the court of Ananta of Kashmir. *Rāmāyaṇa Mañjarī*, *Bhāratamañjarī*, *Byhathkathāmañjarī*, *Rājāvalī*, *Daśāvalāracaritam*, *Cārucaryā*, *Caturvarga Saṅgraha*, *Suvṛtta Tilaka*, *Samayamātykā*, *Loka Prakāśa*, *Deśopadeśa*, *Darpadalana* and *Aucitya Vicāra Carcā* are some of the books from his fertile pen. His easy flow of language resembles the brook in its limpid course. The first three in the list of his works given above are his major performances. *Vyāsadāsa* was an honorific suffixed to his name in appreciation of his voluminous writing. In his epitome of the *Mahābhārata*, a briefly summarized *Gītā* also finds a place. He seems to have sat at the feet of Abhinavagupta to learn the art of writing. In spite of the fecundity he was capable of, there is not

much one can remember in his writings.

HEMACANDRA. (12th century). *Kumārapāla-caritam* is a poem of twenty cantos said to have been composed by this author. The last eight cantos of this book are couched in Prākṛt. Certain critics are of the opinion that the Prākṛt portion was not his but written by some other poet. He was equally at home in the grammar of both Samskr̥ta and Prākṛta. The title *Kaliyuga Sarvagña* was applied to him in appreciation of his all-round knowledge. Smaller poems and glossaries also claim his authorship.

MANKHA. (12th century). He hailed from Kashmir and was known for a work of twenty-five cantos called *Śrīkaṇṭha Caritam*. The ancient episode of the burning of Tripura by Śiva forms the theme in this long poem. In the last canto contemporary history finds a place where the poet's brother is mentioned as having gathered a learned assembly in the immediate presence of King Jayasimha.

JAYARATHA. (12th century). Kashmir, in her fertility of poets, produced a writer of this name who wrote a book called *Haracarita Cintāmaṇi*. In the descriptions of Śiva's life, we get accounts of the Kashmiri Saivite sect.

SRI HARSA. (12th century). He was born a Brahmin, the son of a couple by the names of Hīra and Māmalla Devī. He acquired poetic gifts by pronouncing *Cintāmaṇi Mantra*. He was reputed to have possessed a capacious brain which easily mastered the six Darśanas and the traditional sixty-four arts. He wrote a book on Śāstra called *Khaṇḍana-Khaṇḍana-Khādya* which can baffle even the most erudite scholars. Persons

versed in Advaita philosophy as well as Tarka find this book very hard to understand. Other works, by name, *Vijayaprasasti*, *Chandahprasasti*, *Gandorviśakulaprasasti*, *Aṇava Varṇanam* and *Śiva Bhakti Siddhi*, are ascribed to his scholarship and power of exposition.

Among his poetical works *Naiṣadhiyacaritam* alone is available to us. The story of Nala and Damayanti is narrated with sufficient wealth of detail. His knowledge of the Śāstras has found scope in this poem. Some may not excuse him for his work smacking so much of the Śāstras. By a peculiar deftness of language he can hit off many suggestions and ideas in one and the same stanza. For instance, in the scene where Damayanti feels perplexed at seeing five Nalas all of the same size and features, he has employed a verse which, if scanned carefully, discloses appropriate words to describe individually each of the five persons in their true qualities and proportions.

Naiṣadhiyam is generally compared by the Sanskrit world of scholarship to a medicinal potion administered to the heart that seeks strength to sustain it. The *Utprekṣas* employed in the poem are not all quite intelligible to an ordinary reader. No doubt as illustrations of far-fetched *Utprekṣas* there can be found many stanzas in this work alone. Appayya Dīkṣita, who lived in the 16th century, draws upon this work copiously for many of the illustrations in his works of established reputation on poetics. Harṣa in one place boasts of his own language being not easily understandable by all and sundry.

Only twenty-two cantos are available of this highly reputed poem. Tradition believes in the extent of this

work up to three score and more cantos. Strangely enough, this work finds a place among the illustrious *Mahā Kāvya*s, five in number, the other four being the *Raghuvamśa* and *Kumārasambhava* of Kālidāsa the *Śiśupālavadha* of Māgha and the *Kirātārjunīya* of Bhāravi. These five great works, according to the Sanskritists of old, would alone provide correct knowledge to a student of Sanskrit idiom and vocabulary. Maybe Māgha's work and the *Naiṣadhīya* have been included among works of the first rank for other reasons than mere poetic qualities alone.

✓ **BĪLHANA.** (11th century). This poet wrote *Vikramāṅka Deva Caritam*. He writes a clear style and breathes much significance through his lines. *Caura Pañcāśikā* is another of his well-known poems dealing with love as the main sentiment.

✓ **JALHANA.** (12th century). He wrote *Somapālāvilāsa*, evidently taking the King of Rājapuri by that name for his subject. *Mugdhopadeśa* is another of his works.

VASUDEVA KAVI. (12th century). He was gracing the court of a King named Kulaśekhara. His chief contribution to Kāvya literature is a poem of eight cantos bearing the title of *Yudhiṣṭhira Vijayam*.

KAVIRAJA. (12th century). He was the poet-laureate in the reign of Kāmadeva Rāja. His contributions of importance are his *Pārijātāpaharaṇam* of ten cantos and his *Rāghava-pāṇḍavīyam*, a poem bearing the mark of the device by which the twin stories of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are revealed in the same verses employed.

VIDYA MADHAVA. (12th century). *Pārvalī-Ruk-*

miṇṇiyam is the work of this poet, and again two episodes pertaining to Pārvatī's and Rukmiṇī's marriages with Śiva and Kṛṣṇa, respectively, are told in the same narrative.

SOMAPRABHACARYA. (12th century). He is a poet to be remembered for his extraordinary cleverness in trying successfully to introduce in a book called *Śatārtha Kāvya* nearly a hundred ideas in each of the stanzas he employed. Indeed, though not enjoyable reading to all, it shows the author's remarkable knowledge of grammar and his mastery of diction, without which the result at which his efforts aimed would be futile.

AMARACANDRA. (13th century). He was the author of *Bāla Bhārata*. The story of the *Mahābhārata* is narrated in eighteen cantos to conform to the number of Parvans of the *Mahābhārata*. Vākḥaṭa is said to have been his preceptor, and a special feature of this poet was his intolerance of others' flourishing at the court of Viśāla, a ruler of Gūjara. He wrote two other works called *Chandoratnāvalī* and *Jinendra Caritam* or *Padmānanda Kāvya*.

VIRA NANDIN. (13th century). His work entitled *Candraprabhā Caritam* is of seventeen cantos. In the later portions of this book, Jina is represented as an incarnation on earth of the God Indra. The last canto explains numerous Jain religious doctrines. The author's native place is said to be Gūjara.

KRSNANANDA KAVI. (13th century). He was the author of a book named *Sahydayānanda*, of which the theme is the story of Nala and Damayantī. Since the verses are simple and resemble in some measure Kālidāsa's lines, some have given it greater recognition than

it would otherwise have had. No doubt, towards the closing portion of this book the writer shows deterioration by indulging in *Śabdālankāras* or mere sound artifices.

SOMADEVA. (13th century). He lived and flourished at the court of Bhīmadeva. His books are *Kīrti-kaumudī*, *Surathotsavam* and *Rāma Śatakam*. In the second of these a fine description of the Himālayās finds a place. Some are of the view that he must have had Bilhaṇa as his model for composition.

VIDYA CAKRAVARTIN. (13th century). *Rukmiṇī Kalyāṇam* is the title of his poem. The early section in it gives us a description of the Hosala dynasty of kings.

ABHAYA DEVA. (13th century). He was a Jain by religion and bore also the title *Vādībhasimha*. His chief contribution to literature is a poem in nineteen cantos called *Jayanta Vijayam*.

MANIKYA CANDRA. (13th century). He also was a Jain, who wrote *Pārśvanātha Caritam* and *Śāntinātha Caritam*, and his chief objective appears to be propagation of the tenets of Jain philosophy.

MANIKYA CANDRA. Another poet with the same name living in the same century wrote a poem called *Nalāyana Mahā Kāvya*, a drama entitled *Setu Nāṭaka* and a treatise on poetics, by name *Sāhitya Sāra*.

PUERNABHADRA. (13th century). His main works are *Daśaśrāvaka Caritam*, *Sāubhadra Caritam*, *Kṛtapuṇya Caritam* and *Atimukta Caritam*.

DEVA PRABHA SURI. (13th century). He wrote a book of eighteen cantos called *Pāṇḍava Caritam*.

JINA RATNA. (13th century). His book goes by

the name of *Nirvāṇa Līlāvatī*.

PADMAPRABHA. (13th century). His twin works are *Kunthunātha Caritam* and *Munisuvrata Caritam*.

VASTUPALA. (13th century). He was a king and an author as well. He earned the title *Kavikuñjara* and also was reputed as *Laghu Bhoja* for his patronage of poets and scholars. *Nara Nārāyaṇānandam* is a book by him, dealing with Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa.

NARACANDRA. (13th century). *Kathāratna Sāgar* is the name of his poem.

ARISIMHA. (13th century). He wrote *Śakti Saṁhīrtana* about the King Vastupāla.

VIDYARANYA. (13th century). His is a name famous also for achievements in other fields of activity. *Śaṅkara Vijayam* or the story of Śaṅkara's life that was identified with his name is only a collection of verses pertaining to Śaṅkara's life from various other writers. It is said that this author, after being a minister to a king of Vijaya Nagara, took the yellow robe and became a recluse. Many treatises on Śāstraic topics also owe their existence to him. Sāyaṇa of both Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta fame, is deemed by one traditional version to have been Vidyaraṇya himself in a previous *Āśrama*, and by another, to have been a brother of his.

VEDANTA DESIKA. (13th century). Many works emanated from his fertile pen. *Yādavābhyudayam*, *Raghuvīra Gadya* (a prose work), *Māra Sambhava* and others belong to him. About 101 works are said to have been written by him. His style shows dignity combined with liveliness, and bears individuality of a high order.

SAKALYA MALLA. (14th century). The work for which he became known is *Udātta Rāghava* in eighteen

cantos. It deals with Rāma's life. But only the first seven *sargas* are now available.

AGASTYA. (14th century). He was a court poet of the well-reputed Pratāpa Rudra of Orangal. He is now deemed by some to be the poet Vidyānātha who composed the work *Pratāparudriyam*. On account of his great scholarship he might well have earned the title of *Vidyānātha*.

GANGA DEVI. (14th century). She was a poetess and a Queen. Her style is engaging and sweet, as evidenced in her book called *Mathura Vijayam* or *Vira Kamparāja Caritam*, which deals with the marches of her husband and King, *Kamparāja* of Vijaya Nagara, in his career of conquest in the South.

VIRUPAKSA. (14th century). He wrote a book named *Narakāśura Vijayam* in nine cantos.

VAMANA BHATTA BANA. (15th century). His poetical works are *Nalābhyudayam* and *Raghunātha Caritam*.

CANDRACUDA. (15th century). As the author of a book named *Kārtavīrya Vijaya*, he follows the technique of Naiṣadha, though his style is certainly more simple.

SURYA KAVI. (16th century). He was otherwise known as Daivajna Sūri or Paṇḍita. An interesting poetical work of the name of *Rāma-Kṛṣṇa Viloma Kāvya* is to his credit. When read from one side the verses convey the story of Rāma and when perused from the other end to the beginning the story of Kṛṣṇa's life is revealed in this book. Such kinds of tricks in technique are very common in Sanskrit writers.

CIDAMBARA. (16th century). His work *Rāghava-Yādava-Pāṇḍavīyam* connotes three stories of the lives

of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas, combined in the same verses.

SRINIVASA DIKSITA. (16th century). Many titles like *Dantidyoti-Divāpradīpa*, *Ratna Kheṭa*, etc., are affixed to his name. His two important productions are *Śitikanṭha Vijayam* and *Bhaimī Parinayam*.

KUMARA TATACARYA. (16th century). He wrote a book on the familiar theme of *Pārijātāpaharaṇam*.

GOVINDA MAKHIN. (17th century). Acyutappa Naik of Tanjore and his successor had this author at their courts. He later was chosen by the king as his minister. He belonged to Tanjore. His work *Sāhitya Sudhā* deals in verses with the history of the kings of Tanjore such as Achyuta and Raghunātha. This book has not come in light.

VENKATADHVARIN. (17th century). *Yādava-Rāghaviyam* is a poem to this poet's credit and combines in the same narrative the two stories of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma.

VENKATESVARA. (17th century). *Rāmacandrodayam* is the poem ascribed to him. He was living in Kāñci.

MEGHA VIJAYA GANI. (17th century). A Jain, he wrote a book called *Sapta Sandhāna*, which combines in the same stanzas the accounts of seven teachers like Vṛṣabhanātha, Śantinātha, Pārśvanātha, Nainnātha, Mahimasvāmir, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. Another book, *Digvijaya Mahākāvya*, in thirteen cantos, also claims him as its author.

RAGHUNATHA BHUPATI. (17th century). He was a king of Tanjore who did much to encourage poetry and the arts. Himself an author of some merit, he

wrote a number of works. Thus we have from him *Pārijātāpaharaṇam*, *Vālmikīcaritam*, *Acyutendrābhyudayam*, *Gajendra Mokṣa*, *Nalābhyudayam*, *Rukmiṇī-Kṛṣṇa Vivāha*, *Yakṣa Gānam*, *Rāmāyaṇa Sāra Saṅgraha*, *Bhārata Sāra Saṅgraha*, etc. Indeed the list is neither insignificant nor small. This ruler was made the hero of a number of poems by other poets living in those times.

MADHURAVANI. (17th century). This is the title of a poetess whose real name we are unable to ascertain. She was one of the persons patronized by Raghunātha, and her work of importance is a Sanskrit version of her patron Raghunātha's *Rāmāyaṇa Kāvya* in Telugu.

YAJNA NARAYANA DIKṢITA. (17th century). He was the son of the famous Govinda Dikṣita, Minister of Tanjore Kings. His work, in thirteen cantos, which has been recently published by the Madras University, is named *Sāhitya Ratnākaram*. His other work which is in praise of the king, is *Raghunātha Bhūpa Vijayam*. There is not much clarity in his style.

RAJACUDAMANI DIKṢITA. (17th century). Being the son of Ratna Kheta Dikṣita, he also lived in the times of Raghunātha Bhūpati of Tanjore. He was praised for his erudition and taste as of equal merit with those of his father. Versed in Mīmāṃsā and *Alaṅkāra Śāstras* he wrote many literary pieces. *Rukmiṇī Kalyāṇam* is a poem published by the Vani Vilas Press. Other works of his go by the name of *Śaṅkarābhyudayam* in six cantos, *Citramañjari*, *Rāmakathā*, *Ratna Kheṭa Vijayam* (a biographical account of his own father), *Śṛṅgāra Sarvasva Bhāṣa*, *Ānanda-Rūghavam*, *Kamalinī Kalahamsam*, etc.

KRSNA DIKSITA. (17th century). Known by another familiar name as *Ayyā Dīkṣita*, he graced Raghunātha's court and wrote a poem full of *Śleṣa* called *Naiṣadha*.

MRTYUNJAYA DIKSITA. (17th century). He was Kṛṣṇa Dīkṣita's son and his work in 16 cantos is called *Pradyumnottara Caritam*.

NILAKANTHA DIKSITA. (17th century). We have occasion to refer to him and his style in many other places, and hence we give here only the name of a work which comes in the category of *Mahākāvya*s namely *Śiva Līlārṇava* in twenty-two cantos. It contains the sixty-four līlās of *Hālāśyanātha*. Another poem also in eight cantos, by name *Gaṅgāvataraṇam* has come from his fertile pen.

BALA KAVI. (17th century). He hailed from a village in North Arcot District named Mullandram. His work is called *Ratna Ketūdayam*.

SAMARA PUNGAVA DIKSITA. (17th century). He belonged to Tiruvālaṅgādu. He wrote something of a travel diary containing the account of his pilgrimage, called *Yātrāprabandham* which answers more the requirements of a *Campū*.

CAKRA KAVI. (17th century). He wrote four accounts from Puranic episodes regarding the marriages of Janakī, Draupadī, Rukmiṇī and Gaurī.

RAMABHADRA DIKSITA. (17th and 18th centuries). A village in Tanjore called Khaṇḍramānikam claimed him. But he belongs really to the illustrious roll of writers whom Tiruvisalore has given us. He graced the court of a later prince of Tanjore, Shahaji by name. He was a great devotee of Rāma. His main work is known

as *Patañjali Caritam* in which the author of the *Mahā Bhāṣya* is the subject of an account. His verses in praise of Rāma which have earned for him much appreciation, are contained in his *Rāmabāṇa Stavam*, *Rāmācāpa Stavam* etc.

SRIDHARA VENKATESA (AYYAVAI). (18th century). A great devotee of Śiva, he was a contemporary of Sadāśivendra of Pudukkottah, another famous poet-sage. His poem is written about a ruler of Tanjore called Shahajendra Vilāsa. *Ākhyā Ṣaṣṭi* is a stotra piece to his credit.

GHANASYAMA. (18th century). He was a minister of Tukkoji of Tanjore. He was reputed for having to his credit sixty-four works in Sanskrit, twenty in Prākṛt and twenty-five in other languages. Some names require mention here, for example, *Bhagavatpāda Caritam*, *Veṅkateśa Caritam*, *Prasaṅga Līlārṇava*, *Saumanī Maṇḍana*, *Anyāpadesa Śataka*. Many accounts of places of pilgrimage also are written by him. His other well-known work, called *Āboddhākara*, contains the stories of Nala, Kṛṣṇa and Hariścandra.

HARADATTA. (18th century). His work is named *Rāghava Naiṣadhiyam*.

SOMESVARA. (18th century). His work is entitled *Rāghava-Yādavīyam*.

KRSNAMURTI. (18th century). His work is known as *Kanakadbbhuta Rāmāyaṇam*.

ANANTACARYA. (18th century). *Yādava-Rāghava-Pāṇḍavīyam* claims him as its author.

ANANTA SURI. (18th century). His works are *Hariścandrodayam* and *Nala-Hariścandrodayam*. His style is full of śleṣa.

LAKSMANA SURI. (19th and 20th centuries). He belonged to Tirunelveli District and lived till recently. His works are *Bhagavatpādābhyaṇḍayam* (Life of Śaṅkara), *Dillī Sāmvrājyam* (A poem describing the coronation of King George and Queen Mary in Delhi) and *Bhīṣma Caritam*, a prose work. Many other works also claim him as their author.

KAVYAKANTHA GANAPATI SASTRIN. He was born in Andhradesa. His main poems are *Parasurāma Vijayam*, *Aruṇagiri Sahasram* and *Umā Sahasram*, each of the latter two in a thousand verses. He has written many verses in smaller metres also. *Sad-Darśanam* is a book containing the philosophy of Rāmāṇa Maharṣi of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. His style is really attractive in its simplicity. His poetic merit is of no mean order. He may even be said to be the last to possess the vestiges of the style of the classical authors.

KSHAMABAI ROW of Bombay. Her capacity for versification in simple Sanskrit cannot be forgotten in this context. She is still with us. Apart from a biographical sketch of her own father, she has written the life of Mahatma Gandhi which has earned her much appreciation.

The above account or list of authors whose contributions to the category of *Mahākāvya*s we have supplied is by no means exhaustive. Many others there are who have written verses, but only the sustained efforts bearing the technical features of a *Mahākāvya* are given here. Maybe the works of some even of these appear unworthy of the name of a *Mahākāvya*. But they cannot be otherwise classified in Sanskrit literature.

IV.—GADYA OR PROSE-WRITING

The existing works in Gadya composition, though not as numerous as metrical compositions, show no less conspicuousness, as some of them at any rate impress us as masterpieces in that branch of writing. A *Kādambarī* can certainly compensate for all the lack of high-class pieces in prose-writing. It will be no exaggeration to call it even a compendium of all that is exquisite and glorious in Sanskrit literature. Its intoxicating style and exhaustive treatment of subjects have not many equals in the field of prose.

BHATTA BANA, the celebrated author of *Kādambarī*, was also famous for another high-class production in prose-writing named *Harṣacarita*. Many sources of knowledge seem to have chosen a safe repository in him. But at the same time, he can never stint of his riches. He shows himself prodigal in everything he touches, whether it be a description of a forest or of a battle. All available knowledge and information about plants and trees which it may be the legitimate sphere of the science of botany to disclose, receive from him adequate treatment. In the same way, in a battle, every kind of armour worn or weapons used gets described to us with a sense of completeness, unique of its kind. Above all, one is easily led captive before the serried array of his sentences which march on and on with banner and with music.

Indeed, in the cataract of sounds and symphonies of his language, one can hardly take breath to pursue the meaning. Tradition has not vainly tried to describe *Kādambarī* as a rare intoxicant one who has once tasted

which never goes in search of any other. Such is the writer's art that in many places in this master-piece, he shows such identification of himself with his subject that people reading it may forget that a book is being read and think that the author himself is speaking in clear tones. A further version of tradition gives us the story that the great Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa breathed his last while describing Kādambarī's affliction on her separation from Candrāpīḍa, her lover. Again, Mahāśvetā's wail resounds in our ears for long, and we begin to entertain a strange feeling that it is Bāṇa's own soul in distress.

Kaṭiñjalā, a character in this book, exclaims: "O Sarasvatī! widowed art thou?" Normally such a sentiment would not be tolerated in any other writer, because it would be sacrilege to suggest the Goddess Sarasvatī's being in such a forlorn condition.

Bāṇa disarms critics by his superior art. Again, commenting on Bāṇa Ānandavardhana exclaims: "Bāṇa's phrases and figures of speech march in such close succession, one upon the heels of another, that they seem competing among themselves for reaching Kādambarī herself."

The customary nine prime *rasas* are handled with effortless ability by Bāṇa. Humour is felt to have had enough scope for its display in the incidents connected with Jaradraviḍa-Dhārmika in this book. The satirical element too has not escaped Bāṇa's eyes, for he has introduced it where the parrot talks to Candrāpīḍa.

Some information regarding Bāṇa's life and history are needed to appreciate his mind and art. He was born a Brahmin, though in his daily life he indulged in

luxuries fit for a king. He led a group of connoisseurs in art of his times and travelled also far and wide.

Harṣacarita forms the next important vehicle for Bāṇa's literary genius to express itself. The hero of this historical romance is Harṣavardhana, the famous ruler of Kanauj (606-646 A.D.). The king was Bāṇa's patron and friend. In this work, Bāṇa's style has in some places reached somewhat of an overwrought stage with more than enough matter to prove even hard reading. But to judge of him impartially, this departure from his usual manner should not be taken into account. For Bāṇa never lacks the harmony of sound and sense without much of a trace of conscious art. No one whose heart feels the pulse of real art can be blind to Bāṇa's literary achievements, for no sentence emerges from his pen without some deep significance embedded within, no descriptive passage is reeled off without the graces of language nestling close to it and no figure of speech is employed without great appropriateness distinguishing it from the rest of its kind.

Readers today of Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* may feel a real doubt whether the author cares for the execution of a fine plot or for any of those situations which bear the stamp of probability. Was he really hanging all his fancies or even fantasies on the nearest peg he could find? Well, we cannot satisfactorily silence such critics. For much that art comprehends may not partake of this world of reality or visibility to the normal mind. To an artist who cares only for opening a slit, as it were, through which the imaginative reader can espy a wonder-world beyond, where he can roam and have his thirst quenched in that reality behind all the seeming

contradictions of life, there may be no limitations such as ordinary men experience. True, therefore, to some of Bāṇa's characters the event of a next birth makes not much more of a difference than that of the next day. Strangely too, heaven and earth seem quite within a stone's throw of some of his other characters. If a country with a tradition and culture which never could dream of a life short of Eternity, can make itself insensitive to a Bāṇa of such great range of imagination, then, perhaps, we may be sure of the deep knell that will be sounded for all those rare experiences for which poets have lived in our country.

It is said that the latter half of *Kādambarī* was finished by Bāṇa's own son, Bhūṣaṇa Bāṇa or Bhūṣaṇa Bhaṭṭa. Despite marks of an inherited art exhibiting themselves in his work, critics have, however, wavered in according to him an equal rank with his father. But certainly the son was not unworthy of a place among a galaxy of writers without whom Bāṇa's eminence too could be imperceptible to us.

SUBANDHU. An earlier writer of Gadya no doubt, he can come only second in rank to Bāṇa. Bāṇa has not forgotten to mention Subandhu's name in his *Harṣacarita*. He must have preceded Bāṇa, living about the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th centuries. *Vāsavadattā* is the title of his renowned piece of prose-writing. His fascination with making puns on words and his pedantry in style repel readers who have had their hearts' content of satisfaction in Bāṇa. But a word of explanation may not be out of place here in defence of those who cannot resist the temptation of puns in the Sanskrit language. The Sanskrit vocabulary

provides scope for the employment of such devices. Even Bāṇa cannot be said to have proved himself immune to its influence.

Subandhu also showed not much of a regard for keeping up the story interest. If, without much of a plot or story, the books that some of these great writers wrote still attract readers, it speaks no doubt volumes for other inherent qualities which, alas, our present-day poverty of Sanskrit knowledge has rendered invisible to most of us.

✓DANDIN. He must have certainly lived much prior to the other two, the 6th century claiming him. He was a past-master in the art of story-telling. Indeed, it was not an ordinary achievement for a writer of those times to have produced a book like the *Daśakumāra-caritam*. Full of adventures and romantic episodes, it is a figment of imagination which can certainly satisfy the cravings for fiction in the reader and also prove a fecund source of striking situations for adaptation by the screen of today.

There are no long descriptive passages, which easily distinguishes this book from its successors. Interesting treatment of topics like magic, sorcery, political diplomacy, burglary, sex-psychology etc., find, however, a place in this book. Men with their honour "rooted in dishonour" are diverting us in these pages. Too many names and persons to remember occur in them. But Daṇḍin has sparingly employed long compounds. The chief merit of his work is his compelling power of story-narration. He is never bookish in his epithets; he can ever be a model for simple and lucid writing.

His *Avantisundari*, of which portions have recently

been rescued from oblivion, is believed to represent the fuller prose piece another part of which is now known as *Daśakumāracaritam*. *Avantisundarī* is also a story of pure imagination, though Daṇḍin touches here the peak of refinement of language. An ornate style is indeed difficult for him.

UDAYA DEVA VADIBHA SIMHA. *Gadya-cintāmaṇi* and *Kṣatra-cūḍāmaṇi* are two prose works ascribed to this Jain writer, who evinces much naturalness and facility for writing. Somehow he is not quite so well-known to Sanskrit readers as Daṇḍin or Bāṇa.

VAMANA BHATTA BANA is another name in this list of Gadya writers who cannot be ignored. He was descended of the same gotra as the great Bāṇa himself and prided himself upon his ability to excel his predecessor in writing. The title of the book is *Vemabhūpāla Caritam* dealing, as it does, with a king of that name who ruled in the Andhra territories. There are four chapters in this book, of which the first three narrate the line of the king and the fourth alone describes the hero of the piece. Generally it is laboured and irregular of style.

Gadya Kāvyaas are further classified as *Ākhyāyikās* and *Kathās*. The distinction may seem unnecessary when we find that the demarcation is not based upon any real difference in quality or content. The only difference, if there is any at all between the two, can be said to be that, whereas in an *Ākhyāyikā* the hero himself narrates his story, in a *Kathā* there is hardly any such stringent rule. Daṇḍin, the critic, has promptly knocked these distinctions on the head.

V.—CAMPŪ

This is a type of composition peculiar to Sanskrit, as it contains a free mingling of prose and verse in the course of a narration. This type has attracted to it many promising talents. Apart from this we know of a great many writers who commanded equal facility for writing both prose and verse. For instance, Bāṇa and his predecessor Daṇḍin showed great powers of versification in the course of their prose narratives. Moreover, Bāṇa was credited by some with a drama called *Pārvatī-pariṇaya* which necessarily partakes of writing both in verse-form and in dialogues, showing thereby his capacity for all types of literary writing. In *Harṣacarita*, there is a verse describing the pose of a reclining horse as well as its slow movement in getting onto its legs. The picture that it leaves on a reader is so real and graphic, that Bāṇa even for this single instance of successful verse-portraiture earned the sobriquet of *Turaga-Bāṇa*. Daṇḍin in his *Kāvyaadarśa* shows immense ability to clothe in verse form the serious discussion of a subject like poetics. To combine, on the other hand, both capacities in a single piece of writing cannot be without its own special attraction to facile writers. Hence the rise of many *campū kāvyas* in Sanskrit literature. There may be no occasion in such literary writing for one getting bored with too much of either verse or prose. At any rate, a much later writer called Venkaṭādhvarin gave this very reason for his employing the *campū* form of composition for expressing his thoughts.

Campūs are not traceable to a much earlier date than that succeeding the *Kāvya-Nāṭaka* period in

Sanskrit literature. One cannot definitely point to the campū style of composition existing in Vedic writing merely because one happens to find there certain verses and non-metrical sentences side by side. In both the *Mahābhārata* and the *Samhita* portion of the *Yajurveda*, no doubt, there are instances of verse and non-metrical writing found mixed up in the course of the narration of a single episode.

Among the celebrated campūs the *Rāmāyaṇa Campū*, the *Mahābhārata Campū* and the *Nilakaṇṭha Vijaya Campū* form the important landmarks of successful writing in the field. But there is not among the so-called Campū writers any mighty name to stand as a peer to either a Kālidāsa among writers of verse or a Bāṇa among prose-writers.

BHOJA. His *Rāmāyaṇa Campū* has been enjoying a very extensive popularity on account of its mellifluous language. Readers flock to it because of Bhoja's easy expression and his skill of narration of an epic like the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The distinctness of his craftsmanship is generally called *ukti cāturya* or cleverness in making his points. His ear for alliteration and his employment of enjoyable figures of speech make his poetic composition not altogether a beaten track. He is deemed to have stopped with the *Sundarakāṇḍa* and it is held that another completed the unfinished manuscript. Whenever *campū* is mentioned, *Rāmāyaṇa Campū* easily comes into people's minds as an illustration of its high-water-mark.

ANANTA BHATTA. His *Bhārata Campū* has no less appeal to lovers of Sanskrit. Still it has not gained equal recognition among a wider audience. There is

much evidence in it of greater erudition than in the *Rāmāyaṇa Campū*. But Ananta Bhaṭṭa leaves on readers an impression of his laboured effects in shaping *alankāras*. He freely indulges in exaggerations of a type not unfamiliar to students of Sanskrit. For instance, he can say, describing a city of mansions, that the moon had to pass through the windows of the upper stories of the buildings in that city and get his face smeared all over with the soot from the chimney-smoke. Again, in order to vivify a description of a lady's slender waist, he pictures her thighs and hips as trying in competition to reach a destination which seemed nowhere to exist. The voluminous *Mahābhārata* in the *Campū* gets compactly told as a brief narrative.

It is said that there is also a *Bhāgavata Campū* from the pen of the same author, though it has received much less recognition from literary men than either of the two *Campūs* previously mentioned.

NILAKANTHA DIKṢITA. His work is called *Nīlakaṇṭha Vijaya Campū*. Its author lived within three centuries of us. His Sanskrit bears eloquent testimony to the Tamil genius forcing its way into Sanskrit expression. Some of the peculiarities of expression of the Cauvery delta find reflection in his writing. His predecessors like Yajña Nārāyaṇa Dīkṣita were not successful to the same degree in adopting Sanskrit to express the Tamil genius; it was Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita who marvellously harnessed it to such enjoyable purpose. The Sanskrit idiom and grammar easily lent him their services, and the result was that Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita never hesitated to pour out his sarcasm and sparkling wit, native to the soil of his birth, in the time-honoured tongue of the

gods. Like the eddies playing upon the waters of his own dearly loved Cauvery, some of his ironies beautifully sport on the surface of his free-flowing verses.

Among his writings his *Kalividāmbana* ranks as the best for its unfailing hits at some of the social evils of the times. Many of his observations seem too true even today. He was famed for his *Vakrokti* emulating the graceful curve of the crescent moon. In short, he is a poet who can immensely divert the intellect though not touch the deep chords of the heart. There is a belief that he must have written his *campū* while comparatively young. For when compared with his other works like *Śiva Lilāṇava*, it betrays marks of enthusiasm for language at the expense of ideas. *Nilakaṇṭha Vijaya Campū* deals with the old, old theme of the churning of the milky ocean by the Gods and Asuras, the emergence of *Hāla* (poison) and the magnanimity of Śiva among the Gods in consuming it in order to save the world from its evil effects. *Nilakaṇṭha Dikṣita's* own partiality for Śiva among the deities of the Hindu pantheon exhibits itself when he spares none of his praise to any of the other Gods.

VENKATADHVARIN. (17th century). He was a contemporary of *Nilakaṇṭha Dikṣita*. Himself a *Vaiṣṇava* of the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* School of Philosophy, his work *Viśvagūṇādarśa Campū* shows his fervour for the deity of his heart. His other work, *Lakṣmī Sahasra*, deserves also mention. In the *Campū* he adopts the dialogue form for elucidating his points. The major part of that work is written in verse and in name only is it a *Campū Kāvya*.

TRIVIKRAMA KAVI. He was an early writer whose

campū on Nala, otherwise known as *Damayanti Kathā* is worthy of a place in this branch of literary works. The author's father was a poet himself living at the court of one of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Rulers. Tradition gives us an account of how the son was induced by the king to write this campū while his father was away and how, before the first seven chapters were finished, the father returned, necessitating the son's stopping his composition of the further chapters. The quality of its style is not very impressive as it is uneven of language in places.

SOMADEVA SURI. The Jain writer of *Yasastilaka Campū*, wrote about Yaśodhara of Avantī, and many of the Jain doctrines find their way into his work.

LAKSMANA KAVI, whose date is still unascertained, wrote the *Bhārata Campū tilaka*. He was the son of a poet-scholar whose own father was possessed of equally remarkable poetical talents.

ABHINAVA KALIDASA. This appears more a title of the author than a real name. Himself an Āndhra, he belonged to the lower caste. Rājaśekhara, a ruler of Vidyānagara on the banks of the North Pennar had him at his court. He wrote also the *Bhāgavata Campū*; the *Abhinava Bhārata Campū*, *Bhāgavat Pāda Saptati*, *Kaliviḍambana*, etc.

Many other campū writers, though less reputed, are Padmarāja, Kavikuñjara, Somaśekhara Cidambara, Mitra Miśra, Dattātreyā Śāstrin, Rāghavācārya, etc. The Purāṇas supplied them themes for campūs.

VI.—UDAHARANAS

This type of literary writing contains a musical element along with verse, as well as non-metrical lines.

This seems to have been in vogue in much earlier times, for Kālidāsa speaks of it in his *Raghuvamśa* and his *Vikramorvaśīyam*. Even Bhārata and Vidyānātha among writers on poetics speak of its features.

VII.—LAGHU KAVYAS OR MINOR POEMS

If imagination of a writer in the abstract were to act as the mainspring of his outpourings, certainly there could be no anticipation of the exact shape or length of his work. Any abstract thought can induce a poet to visualize a picture pleasing to our fancies. For instance, hunger attracted a poet in Sanskrit to break forth in the following lines: "O, Hunger! You feel elated by attention just as you get enraged by neglect. You are to me the only perceptible Supreme Being." Even airy nothings seem to assume concrete form and substance when poets turn their gaze upon them. Nilakanṭha Dīkṣita somewhere remarks that a poet's tongue always itches for some enjoyable utterance or other and his pen gives beauty to thoughts that surge within.

The *Meghasandēśa* of Kālidāsa is a poem of pure unalloyed imagination. Lyricism of the highest variety caught the fancy of this poet, to pour out his heart in a kind of metre named *Mandākrāntā*. It appears, however, that such a metre, if not wedded to imagery and ideas similar to those contained in the *Meghasandēśa*, may not be attractive in an equal measure. The flitting of Kālidāsa's reverie song across these lines, though obviously put in the mouth of a Yakṣa in exile, cannot but forcibly remind a discriminating reader of a heart that was pining for its native atmosphere. Tagore is led to interpret this song as the sighing of the poet for

the congenial surroundings of his own forest abode, when held from it by the court-life at Ujjain. No doubt this short poem of only two cantos can satisfy anybody's hunger for the inexhaustible treasures of lyric poetry.

If imitation is the best form of flattery, no other known Kāvya in Sanskrit has such plentiful imitators as the *Meghasandēśa*. Some later writers took up the idea of the messenger of love from Kālidāsa and tried to employ it for their own purposes. No doubt, Kālidāsa too cannot claim originality for the messenger taking the love message, for the *Rāmāyaṇa* has it already in Hanumān's memorable services in carrying out such a mission. Still, no other poet before Kālidāsa ever thought of making it the entire theme of a poem, nor did any one later follow Kālidāsa in leaving the theme incomplete, as it were, without the actual delivery of the message. Writers like Rūpagosvāmin in his *Uddhava Dūta*, Vadīcanda in his *Pavana Dūta*, Vaidyanātha in his *Tulasī Dūta*, Varadarāja in his *Manodūta*, Vedānta Deśika in his *Hamsa Sandēśa*, and Lakṣmīdāsa in his *Śuka Sandēśa* and a host of others have all either faithfully introduced the same technique as that of the *Meghasandēśa* or have departed from it a little towards the end in making the message delivered or crowned with success.

Certain other writers have degraded themselves in retaining in part Kālidāsa's own lines or language and completing the rest with their own feeble attempts at versification. Such pieces invariably destroy the satisfaction of readers in finding Kālidāsa's language not repeated in full. But one strong feature of *Meghasandēśa* that has never shown signs of abating even with the

passage of time is the enormous interest critics feel in it. Very many commentaries and reviews have been written in Sanskrit about this tiny poem and many authors are even remembered for their interpretations of Kālidāsa's art and mind as reflected in this single piece.

VIII.—MUKTAKA

This is a peculiar literary form in Sanskrit which is exquisite for its self-sufficiency of matter in a single stanza. Śātavāhana's famous anthology in Prākṛt called *Gāthā Saplasatī* contains many such single stanzas with love themes, often glowing with many colours. *Subhāṣita Ratna Bhāṇḍarakam* and *Śārṅgadharma Paddhati* are similar anthologies.

IX.—STOTRA POETRY

As minor poems *stotra* forms abound in Sanskrit literature. For no poet of any importance has remained without writing at least a few stanzas in praise of some deity dear to his heart. Such a tendency even in poets of greater renown is not without some significance. It may be due to a belief that without *Upāsana* or dedication to God no poet ever receives the rare gift of writing. The first stanza of almost every poem, big or small, and of every drama and dialogue will be a verse of invocation to the All-knowing One. Even to eminent poets like Vālmīki and Kālidāsa are ascribed separate pieces of *stotra*. Thus, lines in praise of the Gaṅgā or *Gaṅgā Stotra* or said to have been composed by the sage Vālmīki. To Kālidāsa are attributed *Devī Pancastavi* and *Śyāmalā Daṇḍakam*. Even great philosophers who have advocated monistic thought are not free from this

tendency. We have Appayya Dīkṣita and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, only to mention two of our greatest exponents of Advaitic thought, writing verses upon the particular deities of their own personal worship. Even Śankara, the greatest teacher who established the theory of the formless, indivisible Soul or Ātman, has been said to have written many *stotra* poems of which *Saundarya Laharī* in praise of the Goddess Pārvatī and others such as on *Dakṣiṇāmūrti*, *Subrahmanya*, etc., have earned for him much popularity and recognition. Another philosopher, Vedānta Deśika, contributed his own delightful quota to the *stotra* field by writing verses like *Pādukā Sahasrā* and *Bhagavat Dhyāna Sōpana*. Leaders of other schools of thought like Caitanya, Madhva and others have all been no exception to this urge in them to write lines in praise of some deity dearest to them. Paṇḍita Jagannātha is justly famous in this context for his *Pīyūṣa Laharī* and *Gaṅgā Laharī*.

No doubt the above-mentioned are all writers who have earned greater reputation for following other streams of intellectual activity. They are not known only for their poems of the *stotra* category. But instances can be given in Sanskrit of very many others who devoted every bit of their thought and language only to enriching *stotra* literature. To point to two illustrious examples, Mūka of Kāñcī whose *Pañcaśatī*, in intoxicated praise of the Goddess Kāmākṣī, and Durvāsa, the ancient sage, who composed his *Lalitā-stavaratnam* or *Āryā Dviśatī*, are both specially to the manner born, and their outpouring breathes both deep devotion and literary charm of a very extraordinary degree. Durvāsa exploited only the metre of *Āryā* for

his purpose. But Mūka employed in his 500 pieces of exquisite workmanship, many different types of metre for his soulful verses.

Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta is a collection of verses by Līlāśuka in admiration of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd of Vṛndāvan. The atmosphere of the banks of the Yamunā, the silvery moonlight playing upon both river and woodlands, the love-lit nights and the petulant moods of the Gopīs encircling round or pining for Kṛṣṇa and all the sports and disturbances of God-intoxicated souls get beautifully portrayed in these lines. The aroma of devotion is wafted by every stanza and line of this most delicious poem.

The *Gīta Govinda* of Jayadeva is more a song-collection than mere poetry set to metre. Again Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the loving pair, are seducing our hearts when Jayadeva sways us with the lilt of music and sensuous imagery. The *Gīta Govinda* has a unique literary attraction for us, as it neither inclines to a poetic attempt proper nor to a musical composition of the *Kṛiti* type or technique.

Speaking of *stotra* literature, one cannot omit the *Kīrtana* form of *Stotra* in Sanskrit indulged in by Śrī Muthusvāmi Dīkṣita of the South. Though the Sanskrit in his richly wrought *Kīrtanas* breathes of long compounds, impressive for their resonance and sound values, one cannot forget the great emphasis upon *Rāga Bhāva* in these pieces. In this context the ecstatic songs of Sadāśiva Brahmendra, the poet-sage of Pudukottah in the South, remind us of an equally rich output in musical form, with this marked difference, that often the ideas partake of Advaitic philosophy and the

technique shows much less sophistication in the branch of music known as the Carnatic school.

In conclusion, we have every reason to include here the name of Nārāyaṇa Bhattatiri of Malabar, whose oft-recited verses of the *stotra* variety upon the presiding deity of Guruvayur are typical of a heart steeped in devotion of a rare kind, mingled no doubt with poetic fancy of a high order.

X.—WORKS ON NITI OR MORALS

Books are found which develop didactic writing and preaching of morals directly. In this group of *Nīti* works Kauṭilyā's *Artha Śāstra* is included. Cāṇakya or Viṣṇugupta, the minister of Candragupta the Maurya, of the 4th century B. C., is credited with this marvellous piece of work, dealing with every aspect of knowledge concerning the art of government and administration of a kingdom. Thus statecraft, warfare, strategy in times of war and peace and interrelationship between States are all dealt with in this treatise which supplies a mine of information useful even in present-day conditions.

Bārhaspatya Daṇḍa Nīti and *Śukra Nīti Sāra* are also of this same category, though the information in these latter works does not show such maturity and exhaustiveness as the *Artha Śāstra*. The *Artha Śāstra* though mainly in prose form contains some verses also.

Kāmandaka's *Nīti Sāra* is a brief summary of the *Artha Śāstra* itself, though in verse form throughout. The verses are generally not high-class literary performances, for they bear much resemblance to those of Śāstra works.

Other works of the *Nīti* category have entirely

different purposes, in that they never allude to statecraft at all but devote themselves exclusively to admonitory themes regarding plain living, upright conduct; behaviour to elders and rulers, etc. Apart from didactic preaching and moralizing, they are not books which deal either with politics in any form or with social theories of any type. In this group we cannot forget to mention a work called *Nīti Sāra* whose authorship is anonymous, but whose value is perceived by students of Sanskrit acquiring knowledge in the time-honoured style when they get all the verses therein by heart.

Nīti Śatakas or 100 verses of *Nīti*, as they are known, also deserve our attention in this context. Bhartṛhari is most widely known for his *Nīti Śataka*. His other works, *Śṛṅgāra Śataka* and *Vairāgya Śataka*, are not quite so popular. Simple as may seem his style, the deeper meaning enclosed in his lines, when understood, is really of practical value in our daily lives.

Nilakanṭha Dikṣitā's *Kalividambana* and his *Sabhārañjana Śatakam* are also of this variety, in that he has exposed the weakness of people and exhorted them to live up to a higher code of conduct. Public conduct and domestic life both have received attention from his caustic pen, and the lively vein which runs throughout his writings saves readers from ennui of any kind.

A word about Dikṣita's humour may not be out of place in dealing with this topic. It is inoffensive generally and provides much mirth to readers by its pungency and felicity of expression. For instance, if he wants to criticize the unconvincing habit in South-Indian households of consulting horoscopes for every slight act of daily life planned as well as the importance

attached to a son-in-law of the house, he cannot resist the temptation of a mock-serious suggestion to include the son-in-law as the tenth planet for consultation, apart from the usual nine which govern our destinies. Sarcasm too emanating from his pen has a sharper edge than normally. For instance he says: "Only by breaking pots or by tearing one's clothes, by crying oneself hoarse like a donkey or by some visible means to excite pity, can a person seek his way to public recognition." Indeed, we need have no difficulty in understanding that he rails at a callous world, indifferent to sensitive artistic souls.

XI.—ANYAPADESA

Sanskrit writers feel no hesitation in adopting a method of writing by which they can take shelter under an apparent meaning for conveying their hidden suggestions. An illustration alone can make our meaning clear. A passage runs like this:—

Antelopes frisk and frolic about the forest glades. What do they care for? If they feel hungry, they have plenty of grass to graze upon as they like. The moment they are satisfied, they recline under the trees and chew the cud with eyes half-closed. They can go to sleep or rise again in search of pastures new. Once they are on the move, they go wherever they like. Oh! the deer, the fortunate deer!

The literal meaning is not difficult to perceive. The inner thought signifies no doubt the complaint of a servant evidently of a royal household, whose movements are curbed and whose services are not duly recognized. He must have seen a herd of grazing deer. His wretched mood must have been responsible for the cry of envy from his lips. Again another verse describes;

for instance, a dog in lion's clothing with a mane, seated majestically with its forelegs stretched in front of it; elephants get frightened at the sight of this pseudo-king of beasts; but the real fact is, this lion cannot get onto their backs or tear their big heads with his claws. The hidden idea can be explained like this; a person clothed undeservingly with power and position cannot be equal to the real tasks when he has to undertake them.

Anyāpadeśa was resorted to by writers whenever they wished to make a stinging remark against anyone without at the same time seeking open enmity for what they wanted to say.

To give but a few writings of this type we have the *Anyoktimāla* of Āchāndi Dikshita, the *Anyokti Śataka* of Somanatha, the *Anyokti Mukṭālata* of Sambhu, and the *Anyāpadeśa Śataka* of Nilakaṇṭha and of Jagannatha.

XII.—ŚRĠGARA OR LOVE POEMS

Many verses can be found in the extensive field of Sanskrit literature, which contain very many love episodes or aspects of love. They are so well executed sometimes that the love depicted may prove the very summation of all one's own desires when freed from all their earthiness. The *Gāthā Saptaśatī* or 700 poems of Śātavāhana are most of them love themes, sparkling and individualistic in their peculiar contents. One compiler or different sets of them may have been responsible for the compilation. The Prākṛt flavour about them adds to their enjoyability. Bhartṛhari's *Śṛṅgāra Śataka* also deals with love, but after sixty stanzas he declines to pensive thoughts. *Śṛṅgāra Tilaka* is a similar piece and Kālidāsa's name gets associated with it,

because of its sweetness. Whenever any poem of endurable features is found without clear indications of its authorship, tradition steps in unhesitatingly to claim it in the name of Kālidāsa. All glory to Kālidāsa, the sweetest minstrel of our ancient land !

Needless for us to impress upon our readers that in the list of love poems Amamka Kavi's *Śṛṅgāra Śalaka* stands out as easily one of the best of its kind.

We have discussed *Laghu Kāvyaś* or minor poems under one head or another, but it may not be deemed unnecessary to point to one unfailing feature of these minor poems. They are always without many cantos or sargas. The theme dilated upon also strikes us as a single idea developed. Complex situations that are brought in generally by other episodes subsidiary to the main theme find no trace in these smaller poems.

Again, there are also to be found stray verses, sometimes appealing very much to us in the same manner as *Muktakas* or single, self-sufficing stanzas. There are to be found groups of them on people's lips too. Such a one we can give here to illustrate the merit of the composition and the significance of its content. There was a King of Cranganore in Malabar reputed for his own great scholarship and talents and for his unapproachable munificence to poets and bards who approached him. He became personally very poor by such free disposal of his riches. Once a poet approached him for gifts and the King wrote a verse on a palm leaf and gave it to the poet saying that if he went to the Travancore Rājā he would shower on him the bounties that he himself could not then afford. The stanza he wrote ran thus :
 " O King, there is no greater patron than poverty, be-

cause, not caring for its own extinction, it has given you to me." The Rājā of Travancore was struck with its beauty and knew from whom such a delicious piece could have emanated.

Similar pieces are extant in all parts of India. Many others are cited by way of illustration in books of *Alaṅkāra-Śāstra*. Other such verses, which contain riddles, baffle us by their strange meanings. Some of them conceal the subject, object and verb in order to make the readers puzzle for some time over their purport.

XIII.—PRAKṚTA KAVYAS

There are not really many poems of great distinction in Prākṛta. Pravarasena's work called *Setu-bandham* is written in Mahārāṣṭrī. It is a very high-class poem, and literary critics have never ranked it much below Vālmīki's or Kālidāsa's works. Daṇḍin especially has remarked of its distinction in words like these: "It is an ocean of great thoughts and bright imagery." One tradition ascribes its authorship to Kālidāsa, and support is generally received for this by the colophon of every canto in this famous work running thus: "This poem written by Kālidāsa at the instance of Pravarasena."

Viṣama Bāṇalīlā in this group is a name which receives reference in Ānanda Vardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*. It is claimed by Ānanda Vardhana as his own. Some verses of it alone are thus known, for the entire work is not to be found anywhere else.

Gaudavaho is the name of a poem in Prākṛta from the pen of Vākpati which should not escape our notice in this context.

Jain and Buddhistic authors have also given us Prākṛtic pieces. Tulsidāsa's *Rāmāyaṇa* is written in Avantī, a variation of Prākṛta. Still the language employed by Tulsidāsa does not conform to the ancient Avantī spoken by the people.

XIV.—KATHAS AND FABLES

The *Bṛhatkathā* of Guṇādhya is a storehouse of many fables. The language employed is Paisāca Prākṛt. Many other poets have liberally drawn upon the sources in the *Bṛhatkathā*. The annals of Vatsarāja are found only in them. A story is current that the author, having found no due recognition for his labours, tore out page after page of this book and threw it in the flames. Kṣemendra and Somadeva Bhaṭṭa have each translated into Sanskrit the *Bṛhatkathā*. No doubt all that was contained in *Bṛhatkathā* is not found in the translations, nor do we have an idea of the exact length of the *Bṛhatkathā*, since it is lost to us. Still the portions translated by Somadeva Bhaṭṭa and Kṣemendra are available as *Kathā Saritsāgaram* and *Bṛhatkathāmanjarī* respectively.

The *Pañcatantra* is a collection of stories in the form of fables though it is really propounding the contents of the *Artha Śāstra* of Kauṭilya. Viṣṇu Śarma, a Brahmin, narrates the stories in a simple and direct style. The entire statecraft is employed in the kingdom of the forest, and we have very appropriate speeches put in the mouths of the various animals.

The *Hitopadeśa* is a later version of the *Pañcatantra*. Both these collections of stories were current from very early times and scholars recognize their having crossed the seas to the Western countries and assumed there different names and shapes.

Chapter VIII

SANSKRIT DRAMAS

I.—FEATURES AND VARIETIES

The Sanskrit Drama can be deemed a compendium of all the fine arts like poetry, music, dancing, painting and histrionics. Histrionics developed out of the art of gesticulation or *Abhinaya*, stage-songs from music, dialogues from speech and scenic arrangements from the art of painting. The Sage Bharata in his treatise on Dancing expresses the opinion that *Nāṭya* derives enrichment from almost everything in life. The *Nāṭaka* or drama too may be said in the same way to derive much from all the fine artistic impulses of life, as it is closely allied to *Nāṭya* or Dancing. Moreover, the art of gesticulation cannot be separated totally from drama, as one needs much education in and initiation into it before proving much of a success in a drama on the stage. The emotions requiring facial expression and the actions from bodily movements have a common source of training in the art of *Abhinaya* or gesticulation.

Even otherwise we can trace common features in *Nāṭya* and *Nāṭaka*. Omitting *Nṛtta* or pure dance without a theme, the rest of the dancing performance appeals in the same way as a dramatic representation. Another

peculiarity in Sanskrit which the drama and the dance seem to have in common is that very often the same subjects are chosen for dramatic representation as well as the dance programme.

Western scholars have traced the origin of the drama in Sanskrit to the passage in the *R̥gveda* where a dialogue occurs between Yama and Yami. But from the fact of a mere dialogue one cannot conclude the dramatic art had its earliest appearance in the Vedas. Our scholars, of traditional upbringing at any rate, do not think that the elements of the drama were conceived in the above-mentioned *R̥gveda* passage. They feel that, no doubt earlier than other literatures of the world, Sanskrit must have exploited this branch of literature with equal facility along with other kinds of writing.

Even before the beginning of the Christian era, books like the *Mahābhāṣya* referred to the valuable services of the dramatic art. Aśvaghoṣa, Śūdraka, Bhāsa and others had, at the dawn of the Christian era, done their work in this field rich already with promises.

II.—THE ART OF DRAMA

The mainsprings of dramatic representation depend upon a choice subject, inspiring sentiments and effective portrayal of emotions. *Nāṭaka* technically derives its name from *Naṭana* or enacting. So does *Rūpaka*, another name for drama, take its origin in the fact of its being gazed at by people. *Rūpaka* is a general epithet to denote drama as a class. *Daśarūpaka* is a name applied by Vāmana to drama with its ten varieties.

Rūpaka has two main divisions—*Rūpakas* and *Uparūpakas*. Again *Rūpakas* signify types like *Nāṭaka*,

Prakaraṇa, *Bhāṇa*, *Prahasana* and others. A *Nāṭaka* includes five important stages of development. They are in order denoted as *Mukha*, *Pratimukha*, *Garbha*, *Vimarśa* and *Upasamhāra*. The *rasa* or main sentiment of the play is no doubt the most essential thing in a drama. All the rest only aid the enrichment of the unfolding of *rasa* in a play. To illustrate the five stages spoken of, let us take the play *Mālatī-Mādhava*. When *Mādhava* is introduced in the streets of a city and he casually meets *Mālatī* and falls in love with her, that stage of the drama is called *Mukha Sandhi*. When the lovers begin to devise plans for meeting each other, such a stage is called *Pratimukha Sandhi*. Then occur events which seem, for the time being, to be frustrating the attempts of the lovers. This stage is *Garbha Sandhi*. Then a ray of hope cleaves the clouds that erstwhile seemed to devour them both in eternal despair. Such a hope is expressed in certain occurrences that encourage the lovers to look forward to their coming together. Such is the *Vimarśa Sandhi*. When finally all difficulties disappear, the lovers are brought together for the wedding and happiness begins to reign, we speak of the *Upasamhāra* or the gathering up of the various trends of the story.

In a way, the technique of development adopted by the Sanskrit drama is not far different from the usual development that we perceive even in a modern drama or novel. For we have in novels, too, certain characters introduced who suggest to us the main course of the story's development. We have then various incidents making such a development more possible. Then other currents in the shape of unforeseen

difficulties crowd in to lead things to a crisis. Slowly also the tangle gets resolved and finally the story ends, sometimes as was hinted at even at the beginning.

On one particular alone the Sanskrit æstheticians laid great emphasis, *i. e.*, on *Rasa*, resulting from the way in which the purpose of all arts is said by them to have arisen.

Coming to the special features of each and every type of drama spoken of already, let us first look at the *Nāṭaka*. It usually deals with some topic of Purāṇic origin or historical interest. Sentiments of popular appeal like love, heroism, etc., enrich it. *Prakarāṇas* also bear similar general features, though there the story can be taken from the author's own imagination. Moreover, *Prakarāṇas* should have ten acts, unlike the *Nāṭaka*. *Bhāṇa* is a type which has for its chief interest a man about town as the dominating character and the drama is throughout a monologue. Both love and heroism are represented in such types. *Prahasana* mainly touches upon the ludicrous element. It can be said to be something like a farce.

The other varieties of the *Daśarūpaka* are not familiar to us, either on account of lack of plays representing them or of their obscurity otherwise, making literary history in Sanskrit preserve little trace of them.

Uparūpakas have not much to differentiate them from *Rūpakas*. If at all there are distinguishable features in them, they are minor ones. Treatises on poetics give little information to distinguish an *Uparūpaka* from a *Rūpaka*, though many of them speak of Bharata's pointed reference to such a distinction. Strangely enough, no verse in Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra* contains

any mention of it. The verses in Bharata which speak of the *Uparūpakas* must have been lost. Otherwise there could be no possible explanation for so many writers' referring to Bharata's definition of *Uparūpakas*.

Uparūpakas have eighteen varieties as enumerated by Viśvanātha Sūri in his *Sāhitya Darpaṇa*. Other later treatises too show at least fifteen types of *Uparūpakas* as having been noticed by Bharata. Some of the names vary from those which are obtained in the *Sāhitya Darpaṇa*. The *Agnipurāṇa* mentions eighteen types of *Uparūpakas* which alone must have induced the author of the *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* to give that number.

A *Nāṭikā* can have also a theme or story drawn from one's own imagination. A *Nāṭika* does not much differ from a *Prakarāṇa* save in the number of acts it contains. A. B. Keith in his *History of Sanskrit Drama* opines that on such slight grounds they should not be separated as of different types. But one impressive feature of variation there is no doubt is in *Nāṭikās*, namely, there are distinctly more women characters in them than in any other form of drama.

As regards other features, the *Nāṭikā* and the *Prakarāṇa* do not vastly differ. For instance, in a *Nāṭikā* also the hero and the heroine meet accidentally and fall in love with each other. Difficulties crop up here also to thwart their union, though finally happiness crowns their attempts. The hero depicted, though known for his prowess in battle, tries to forget the cares of the kingdom in his amorous pursuits in the harem. Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitram*, though grouped with the *Nāṭakas*, has more features of the *Nāṭikā*, while

Harṣa's two plays *Ratnāvalī* and *Priyadarśikā*, though closely resembling Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitram*, get identified as *Nāṭikās*. Western scholars have christened the *Nāṭikā* a "lesser heroic comedy."

The *Prakarāṇikā* is a variety of the *Uparūpakas*. The hero and the heroine belong to the Vaiśya community or caste. Except in this one dissimilarity, a *Prakarāṇikā* easily resembles a *Nāṭikā*. Between a *Prakarāṇa* and a *Prakarāṇikā* there is no great difference. In the story, characters and *rasa* they portray they have everything in common. A critic named Dhanika feels indeed that there is no distinction at all between the two, though the *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* maintains essential points differentiating them. Western scholars have called the *Prakarāṇikā* "the little bourgeoisie comedy."

Again, if a *Nāṭikā* is entirely written in Prākṛt instead of in Sanskrit, if it begins without the introductory scene of *Viṣkambhaka* and if for acts the word *Javanikāntaram* finds a place in it, such a one is recognized as a *Saṭṭaka*. Some identify it with a dance-drama. A. B. Keith surmises its origin from the pure art of the dance.

The *Troṭaka* or *Toṭaka* is another variety of drama which contains characteristics of its own. Some scholars place Kālidāsa's *Vikramorvaśīyam* in this category, while others do not find in that drama anything to distinguish it from a *Nāṭaka*. Other names such as *Goṣṭhī*, *Hallīśā*, *Nāṭyarāsaka*, *Prasthāna*, *Bhāṇikā*, *Ullāpya*, *Samlāpaka*, etc., are also mentioned as of the *Uparūpaka* classification.

III.—THE PLACE OF DRAMA IN SANSKRIT LITERATURE

Though every one of the branches of literary writing requires much of skill and ability to bring success to an author attempting it, the drama needs greater attributes in a playwright to distinguish him. The play conceived of should cater to all tastes required to make of the piece an engaging and impressive representation. The eye normally being more exacting, nothing presented on the stage should offend it. It is not therefore an easy task to satisfy a true *rasika* witnessing a play. Hence perhaps the saying in Sanskrit, that a drama alone is the whetstone of a writer's ability.

Numerous dramas are found in Sanskrit with their varied claims upon our attention. Good, bad and indifferent plays there are, which show the great temptation playwriting has proved to writers in the past. Still we are not also without great dramas which have touched the peak of excellence in art. Some of the greatest among the dramatists knew perfectly well what wondrous possibilities lay in the art of a drama. Kālidāsa when extolling the *Nāṭya*, in Scene II of his play, *Mālavikāgnimitram*, remarks of its being the summation of all the surging desires and tastes among people of varying degrees of appreciation. Indirectly, too, we feel Kālidāsa to have hinted at the *rasa* element alone proving the aim of all our accumulated appreciations.

How, then, does the drama receive such unique recognition from even great writers? What wonderful aim does it possess to have made many an artist of repute so openly enthusiastic? Literary writing in this.

land has not stopped with merely giving pleasure to readers but has acted as a stimulus to their earnest search for the ultimate truth. The mark of perfection for any piece of literature, according to Sanskrit aestheticians, is its capacity to cater to the cravings of the soul more than to those of the senses. Ānandā Vardhana points out that the chief aim of all literature is to seek that *Ānanda* or Bliss which results from *Rasāsvāda* or enjoyment of *rasa*. If the aim of all literary writing is *Ānanda*, then the drama must be surer and quicker in producing the desired results, as generally the visual representation of any art impresses and moves hearts in a greater degree than literary writing can do.

To paint the ideal in order to elevate the minds of the audience who witness a performance became more and more the chief aim of dramatists. In the attempt to secure an idealistic atmosphere and aim, they chose episodes for treatment from great epics like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. Our epic writers have stored up nobility and heroism of all types in the unfading pages of their works. No other literature of the world can boast of such splendid materials for poetic vision and dramatic delineation as some of these great books have revealed to us. Indeed it may seem foolhardiness or a waste of one's energy to seek for fresh episodes or heroes that can surpass either in grandeur or in execution some of the immortal characters or themes that the epics have given us.

Hence, perhaps, the Sanskrit poets have invariably selected their subjects from the Purāṇas of old. A further explanation also may be offered by way of justification for such a selection. A writer generally

cannot divert the attention of readers with the story interest in an old or familiar theme and so deprive them of the full satisfaction derivable from the *rasa* or enjoyment that will result if every one of the other factors in a play is made to contribute its best to its success or fulfilment. Moreover there will be greater scope for a dramatist to present his imaginative powers when the episode is a known piece inducing readers to expect enough dramatic art to satisfy their hunger. The character of a Rāma or a Kṛṣṇa or a Bhīṣma may not evoke enough appreciation in a *rasikā*'s heart unless the dramatist has employed such skill in creating situations, such imagination in developing dialogues and such art as to make the great heroes look in no way poorer than they appear in the pages of the great epics.

It does not mean that no dramas born of a writer's originality are helpful to the elevation of the reader's mind. There can be instances to prove a dramatist's extraordinary ability in divining incidents for the first time or creating a character who has not been previously met with. Do we not have *Mṛcchakaṭīka*, a play born wholly of a playwright's imagination in both its theme and its characters? Indeed, it is an original play that has no equal of its kind in Sanskrit literature. Still none feels it any more enjoyable or satisfying to the true connoisseur of arts than Kālidāsa's *Śākuntalam*. The theme of *Śākuntalam*, though old and taken from the *Mahābhārata* is made to appear very fresh and fascinating because of the poet's creative powers in presenting Śākuntalā as nature's own darling and the love between her and Duṣyanta undergoing a natural metamorphosis from one of casual seeking to a spiritual

bond between the two. Even the great Shakespeare, whose dramatic art reached the pinnacle of perfection, never hesitated in selecting from earlier sources themes for his own dramatic development. Indeed every one of his greater tragedies has chosen character and incident from old tales or sources. Therefore, though it cannot be maintained that original themes can never supply the reader the amount of pleasure or satisfaction that he hopes to receive from a drama, still it cannot be denied either that a drama because of its treatment of well-known heroes and heroines will be the less tasteful or enjoyable to a mind endowed with faculties for appreciation of originality in the theme.

To prove that Sanskrit writers have not been blind to the value of original themes, we have such instances as the *Prabodhacandrodayam* and the *San̥kalpasūryodayam*, written by dramatists of a much later period. Abstract thoughts and allegorical representations have permeated such dramas and influenced readers' minds.

IV.—CHARACTERS IN SANSKRIT DRAMA

On a superficial basis it will be hardly worth while distinguishing Sanskrit dramas from similar types in the literatures in the other languages. Sanskrit dramas there are which present few characters while others present a crowd on the stage. A play called *Jānakī-Pariṇayam* presents a number of persons in one scene. In *Veṇīsamhāra*, another drama, a scene contains only two persons, and of them one alone speaks while the other listens throughout.

Sanskrit dramas generally make audiences think that they are leisurely and lacking tempo in character-

ization. Such a thing, if true, is no doubt a serious defect in the dramatic art. But there are very many compensating qualities in a Sanskrit play that will enable people to forget minor defects, if any, in their enjoyment of the main *rasa*.

The *Udātta Nāyaka* or hero of high birth and endeavour is an essential need of every play. The court-jester or *Vidūṣaka* is another character whose skill alone helps the hero in his plans to win the girl he loves or save her from the clutches of envious other women. Without the *Vidūṣaka* the play of *Mālavikāgnimitra* would be devoid of much of its interest and vitality. But the court-jester happens to play quite a minor rôle in *Śākuntala*, where he is thrown in the shade by the King's own high qualities which seek no device to win over the girl of his heart or to secure her love against her own conscience.

Kaṇcukin is a stereotyped character that always makes his appearance in a play. He is usually represented as old and weighed down with the responsibilities of the royal household. In his mouth generally is put the account of the hero's antecedents and the records of his valour or his success. *Vaitalikas* generally are two persons. They sing verses from behind the curtain either to console the hero in distress or to inspire him to action. They never come out from behind the curtains. *Pratīhārī* and *Vetravatī* are mace-bearers and servants in the royal household who speak an invariable jargon when the hero either enters or quits the stage. The remaining characters are not contrived in accordance with any set formula.

Characterization in the sense of Shakespearean

types or of those of other Western dramatists is not found in Sanskrit writers. Rather, there is little need for characterization absorbing our interest in a Sanskrit play, when the emanating *rasa* of the play is made the prime concern. No doubt characterization too may be useful to enrich our enjoyment of the main *rasa*. But even when characterization plays its appreciable part as in *Śākuntala* and *Mṛcchakaṭika*, we are not able to think of it as in any way of greater help to understanding the play than other factors like sentiments or situations or speeches contrived by the dramatist. If at all characterization has made any impression on our writers, it is only as a minor or subsidiary factor contributing, along with other accessory aids, to the enrichment of the *rasa*. Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti and Śūdraka, though each has left immortal characters to us, have not at all left such a powerful impression of the art of the playwright in characterization as some of Shakespeare's heroes and heroines have done.

V.—THE CONCLUSION OF A SANSKRIT DRAMA

The Sage Bharata in defining the aim of a hero says that he should strive for some worthy or noble object in life and its fulfilment should be the play's purpose. Sanskrit aestheticians will never permit failure of the hero's endeavours to be represented before us. To many of us who are familiar with tragedies of the Western type, this attempt to portray success alone or happiness only at the end of a play will appear too deliberate a contrivance and offending canons of taste regarding naturalness of development in the entire piece. Indeed we may not feel the thwarted endeavours

of men with a high purpose in life as detracting anything from their value to us. On the other hand, they may provide us with a stimulus to emulate them and to take lessons from their failures.

Idealism as painted by Sanskrit writers will not permit of any defeat for the hero on the stage. Even Fate's severest strokes will have to be cancelled by supernatural powers and efficacy of penance. The ideal chosen as the motive of the play should be such that people beholding it should return with their faith strengthened in the good resulting from high endeavours and their senses soothed by the happiness crowning human efforts. According to our ancients, incentive to action and an optimistic attitude in life receive assurance in a greater degree by the representation of evil getting destroyed and sorrows that had erstwhile seemed unbearable dissolving into nothing.

The tragic element as such has never been tabooed in the Sanskrit play, and we have many dramas in Sanskrit in which tragedy seems almost to engulf the important characters but, with the wave of the magic wand of the poet, it recedes even as the mist before the rising sun. Still, everything may seem unconvincing to a modern mind when heroes are not made to meet with failures or to die for their ideals on the stage. Inquisitive minds cannot suppress certain legitimate doubts and questions regarding the purpose of the Sanskritists in ending their plays always in happiness. They may ask why, when even the *Gilā* does not say that success or the fruits of one's labours should be the motive of one's action, there should be this insistence on a happy ending to the drama. The only answer to such a

legitimate complaint will be that, according to our great Teachers, man, born with a mission in life, will be born again and again and will not stop striving till the goal is reached. If a successful end is certain for human strivings, whether in one life or after many lives, that truth must be represented in a drama. The vision should not be so distorted as to impress people who strive in life for good with its ultimate fruition getting postponed. Hence our æstheticians have no qualms in representing the story without an untoward end.

Moreover, another reason also might have impressed writers as just and acceptable for such a happy conclusion. The function of all arts, according to them, is not merely to copy life but to imitate life only in no copying anything. Therefore, the idea of realism which has become an obsession with us, consequent upon our contact with Western literatures, never struck our ancients as of great significance to art. A visual representation of a tragedy or of blood-spilling on the stage naturally would affect hearts in such a way that the mind of the seer could not escape brooding over the scene witnessed. The enjoyment to be born of a play would be disturbed considerably. Such a view may look opposed to the Greek conception of the influence of a tragedy upon people's minds. For the Greeks invariably held the view that human hearts get more chastened and human intellects more sublimated on seeing a great tragedy. Indeed a Hamlet or an Othello will not leave any one in the audience unaffected by the depth or range of the human mind or the strange workings of human psychology. Every chance there will be for the witness becoming more cultured in his

outlook on life when his deep sympathies are stirred by the sight of such characters. The psychological influence of a tragedy, according to Westerners, is not baneful but beneficial. Certainly our ancients too never for once doubted the truth of suffering chastening individuals. Otherwise the exile of a Rāma or of the Pāṇḍavas could not have influenced us in such a way all these years. But beyond recognizing the tragic element as an essential factor in a drama, they were not willing to accede to the drama resulting in a tragedy. It is because they felt the function of art was not to immerse the onlooker's mind in further gropings and doubts, but to aid him to have clarity of mind and to prepare himself for the stage of mental equanimity or serenity. If a Śakuntalā gets rejected by the King and seems almost on the precipice of a great humiliation or an unending sorrow, the beholder's heart receives its fill of the chastening influences of the pathos of the situation. No further or complete extinguishing of hope need be employed to depress the mind. The final scene where Śakuntalā meets Duṣyanta, though contrived by the poet, is not without a purpose. He has impressed us with the satisfaction born of the only goal in life being reached, namely, the union of two hearts in a spiritual embrace. Till then they were bound together by mere passion, but with the fire of misunderstanding and separation purging them of this, they gained true knowledge of Love. The test of the poet's art is in the reader's enjoyment, for no one, be he a Westerner or an Easterner, has hitherto deemed *Śakuntala* a play of immature vision or of imperfect dramatic art. The point can be borne home to a reader, if only he can

imagine Kālidāsa to have ended the play of *Śākuntala* otherwise. There may be other mental consolations in such an ending as one with love's longings thwarted and love left forlorn. But the peace that comes of understanding Love's true inwardness can never be more for us than when Duṣyanta and Śākuntalā regain each other in a deep and abiding understanding of hearts.

VI.—SANSKRIT DRAMATISTS

In books like Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra* we come across references to dramas like *Samudra Mathanam* and *Tripura dāham*. Certainly, such information proves to us the existence of earlier dramas, before the art of dancing was explained by Bharata, who is placed by scholars in the 1st century after Christ. But the plays mentioned by Bharata are not now available and therefore we are handicapped in our estimate of their real merits. One indication of the intrinsic quality of all these emerges, namely, that the lost works must have been of such worth as to have attracted the heavenly crowd, who both enacted and witnessed them before Indra and his celestial court.

Pāṇini is deemed by some to have left two plays, by name *Kamsavadha* and *Balibandha*, neither of which is now available. Vararuci, a sage, left, according to some accounts, a book on dramaturgy. Bharata's treatise also supplies us with information about stage arrangements and other requirements for a dramatic presentation of a play before an audience. One marks with surprise that in spite of much advance of scientific knowledge of the present times, little has been added to what Bharata's treatise supplies us regarding some of

these vital needs of the stage. Moreover, Bharata insisted upon the actors and artistes following every injunction laid upon them. Otherwise, divine wrath would engulf the violators of the injunctions.

Further earlier references show the existence of two dramatists, Rāmila and Soumila whose *kāvya* by the name of *Śūdraka-kathā* describes the life of a prominent king as the main theme. *Mañi-Prabhā* is a drama ascribed to Rāmila alone. We get this piece of information from a commentary on *Guru-Ratnamālīkā* written by Ātma-bodhendra-Sarasvatī. The reference speaks of the simplicity of style and the symphony of words distinguishing the dramatist; but unfortunately we have no further proof of the work itself.

ASVAGHOSA. He is placed by scholars in the 1st century after Christ. His play in nine acts called *Śāriputra Prākaraṇam* is famous for its treatment of Buddhist philosophy. Śāriputra was a disciple of the Buddha and his metamorphosis from a man of the world into a great teacher of renunciation is unfolded in this play. Certain verses and passages towards the end of the play succinctly relate the Buddhist tenets. The book is more impressive as propagandist literature. Perhaps this defect alone detracts from its value otherwise.

BHĀSA. (between 1st and 3rd centuries). Bhāsa is the earliest among known dramatists, whose works today are discovered to be certainly bearing marks of the pre-Kālidāsa period. Thanks to the wonderful discovery of Mahāmahopādya T. Gaṇapati Śāstrin of Trivandrum in 1912, thirteen plays said to have been from Bhāsa beamed upon the literary sky. Their names

are *Svapnavāsavadattam*, *Pratijnā-yaugandharāyaṇam*, *Daridra-Cārudattam*, *Pratimā Nāṭakam*, *Bālacaritam*, *Ūrubhaṅgam*, *Pancarātram*, *Dūtavākyaṃ*, *Madhyamavyāyogam*, *Karnabhāraṇam*, *Dūta-Ghaṭotkacam*, *Abhiṣeka Nāṭakam*, and *Avimārakam*. Two more plays, by name *Viṇāvāsavadattam* and *Yājña-Phalam*, have been added to the known number by more recent discoveries.

Internal evidences of simple style show that the plays must have preceded the later-day sophistication in art and language of poets like Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti. Another feature distinguishing the plays as a rule is that the *Nāṇḍi Śloka* or invocation piece is put in the mouth of the *Sūtradhāra* or stage-manager, whereas in the later plays the *Nāṇḍi Śloka* is represented as the author's own invocation. Bāṇa in his *Harṣacarita* has remarked about this peculiarity in Bhāsa. Later writers invariably refer to certain verses of the *Bhāsa-Nāṭaka-Cakra*. But in the plays that we have got as Bhāsa's, none of the verses referred to by writers on poetics is found. This fact explains the contrary opinion held by certain scholars, that these plays ascribed to Bhāsa might have been of another with the same name and could not be the same as the one whom poets like Kālidāsa and writers on poetics recognized as the great playwright of ancient glory.

In any case, one cannot fail to be impressed by these charming plays in their own way. For they reveal much real dramatic skill in contrivance of situation and dialogue. Moreover, the speech is of so simple and elegant a character as is hardly associated with any other later classical dramatist of repute. One conclusion is inevitable, that whoever might have been their real

author, he must have attained marvellous efficiency in his art. One explanation also may be possible for the omission of the verses usually ascribed to the *Bhāsa-Nāṭaka-Cakra* in the fifteen plays now discovered. Either they may be available in the future with further attempts at discoveries of manuscripts by scholars—for Bhāsa seems to have been a fecund writer—or the verses referred to in the *Bhāsa-Nāṭaka-Cakra*, have been lost owing to the vandalism wrought by white-ants or the mishandling of manuscripts in the process of transcription.

Bhāsa's plays select their themes only from earlier sources like the epics and the *Bṛhatkathā*. Many of the *Mahābhārata* episodes which had not been chosen by any of the earlier or later authors find themselves for the first time made the subjects of fresh dramatization. The *Rāmāyaṇa* has no doubt supplied Bhāsa with interesting themes, and many are the original touches the poet gives these very familiar themes. We get ideas on sculpture and statuary of the most advanced kind in *Pratimā Nāṭaka*, where we find the statues of the Raghu race of kings installed in a special hall dedicated for the purpose. The scene in which Bharata, returning from his maternal uncle's house, is apprised of the death of his father slowly, lest it should be a shock to him when disclosed, depends for its unforgettable impressions upon the skill of the dramatist's art in making the statues of only the departed kings exposed or exhibited to visitors. The increasing anguish of Bharata really brings out the capacity of the dramatist to handle the situation with consummate originality. The other famous drama, *Svapnavāsavadattam*, touches the peak of

artistic skill in both its delicious situations and its engaging conversations. We feel no doubt of the presence of a great dramatist in the author of these plays. The dramas when enacted reveal much more the inimitable art in short dialogues and non-descriptive verses.

BODHAYANA. (1st century A.D.). He is claimed to be the author of a play called *Bhagavad-Ajjukīyam*. It is generally grouped with farces, though, to one who scans its merits, the play reveals really serious propaganda for the Monistic School of Philosophy. The classical style of the play is encrusted with metaphysical phraseology and terms culled from *Yoga Śāstra* and Buddhistic religious books. The compactness of phrases and world-pictures employed by this author account for his name being sometimes spoken of with equal respect along with those of Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti. It seems, however, more reasonable to hold King Mahendra Varman of Kānchi, author of the *Mattavilāsa*, as the author also of the *Bhagavad-Ajjukīyam*.

A group of four rare productions of the *Bhāṇa* type are collected under a single name as *Caturbhāṇī*. They are by Vararuci, Iśvaradatta, Śyāmilaka and Śūdraka. Śūdraka alone among these four shares the appreciation of posterity in the fullest measure. Hence let us deal with him and his art first.

SUDRAKA. Before dealing with his play of the *Bhāṇa* type, let us take the drama for which Śūdraka became really more famous. His fascinating play called *Mṛcchakaṭika* (The Clay Cart) is conceived upon an individual plan of the author. Though this poet is deemed to have lived somewhere in the 1st century after Christ, to this day readers of this drama cannot

but imagine its author of a much later age on account of the innovations he made in developing the theme, the like of which is not at all to be found even in an original playwright like Kālidāsa. For this play of his made a definite departure from the usual types by choosing a courtesan for its heroine and making the love which she bore to a Brahmin merchant in adversity, into something of a very fragrant episode. The love of a woman following the profession of a courtesan unlike the usual type appears constant and elevating enough. Through suffering and humiliation did she follow her own strong faith in a man whom, though fortune had forsaken, good traits had not. Cārudatta, belonging to the élite of the city but driven to the verge of penury and privation, outshines the rest of the characters by his singular devotion to nobility of bearing and magnanimity of heart. The play proves how poets have succeeded in original plays also in the sphere of Sanskrit Drama. Bhāsa's *Daridra-Cārudattam* is felt by some to have been an earlier script of this play, and they postulate the theory that Śūdraka himself might have written the three plays, *Daridra-Cārudattam*, *Bālacaritam* and *Avimārakam*, now ascribed to Bhāsa.

Śūdraka is credited with the authorship of another play, *Padmā-Prābhātakam*. This play easily proves that a *Bhāṣa* need not at all treat of a love-affair in any vulgar sense. Some of the verses contained in it easily lend themselves to tuneful recitation.

Śūdraka was adorning the court of a king of Ujjain. In his youth he incurred his patron-king's displeasure, fell out with him and finally quelled him in battle. He thereafter crowned himself as the ruler of the country.

Another version says that he started the *Vikrama Samvat* or era.

VARARUCI. He is known for his play *Ubhayābhī-sārikā*. He must have been earlier than Śūdraka as he is generally placed before the birth of Christ. *Kathā-Saritsāgara* mentions Vararuci as a contemporary of Pāṇini, the great grammarian. The same preceptor is said to have taught them both. The play mentioned above as his is deemed one of the best of the *Bhāṇa* variety. The theme the poet chose may appear to us common and conventional, but its literary excellence distinguishes it from the rest of the group.

Vararuci, apart from his play, gave the world the benefit of his high intellectual attainments in the shape of works upon Sanskrit grammar and astrology. A prose romance called *Cārumatī* is ascribed to his pen, but is not now in existence.

ISVARADATTA. Among dramas of the *Bhāṇa* type we have from this author a play called *Dhūrta-viṣa-Samvādam*. Though the play is comparatively short, the marks of maturity which it shows are sufficient to rank it with the works of the other two names mentioned above in the group. His age is not yet definitely known. Bhojā's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* mentions his *Bhāṇa*. Hemacandra, in his work on poetics, *Kāvyaṇuśāsana*, accords him recognition. Some are of opinion that this play is entirely based upon the twenty-second chapter of Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra*.

ŚYAMILAKA. He is believed to have lived in the 9th century, and his *Bhāṇa* named *Pāda-taḍitakam* must have earned him great reputation. He is supposed to have hailed from Kashmir. Both Kṣemendra and

Abhinavagupta speak of him in their respective treatises on poetics.

On the whole, these four authors generally given recognition as a group by the name of *Calurbhāṇī*, won much popularity for the *Bhāṇa* type of dramatic art.

KALIDASA. When we come to Kālidāsa, indeed we feel a flutter of joy at the prospect of great art combined with deep poetic vision. Second to none, he is a supreme example in himself of the drama in Sanskrit. He is acclaimed among the world's best dramatists also. His great drama, *Śākuntala*, preserves for us the cream of his experiences and the message of his heart. The forest life eulogized in the Upaniṣads fascinated this poet to such an extent that he created the drama of *Śākuntala* in the environment of the jungle. His remark seems convincing enough, that the rural dwellers are any day purer of heart and more steady of faith in humanity than the urban people whose refinement and culture are only skin-deep and serve only to conceal their utter selfishness.

The story of *Śākuntala* needs no recapitulation here. Many translations of the drama into various languages bear testimony to its unfailing charm for literary persons all over the world. The play needs repeated study in order to receive all the careful attention we are capable of. As at the hour of dawn objects look hazy but with the advancing rays of the sun they appear in their clear-cut outlines and true proportions, so also Kālidāsa's conceits seem enjoyable only in a vague manner on a first casual reading, but with incessant penetration by our intellect, reveal a higher purpose and sublimer comprehension. In *Śākuntalā*

herself are combined both earth and heaven, for she was the child of a sage and an *apsara*. Kālidāsa starts with this combination of earth and heaven in the very origin of his heroine and leads us on to the same purposeful commingling of earth and heaven in the stages of the love between Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā. For he places the youthful, passionate union of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā in the earthly forest and their true union of hearts in the heavenly abode of the Sage Mārīca. There is, of course, a definite significance in this transmutation of their earthly love born of casual cravings into a union of rare and purified type.

The introduction of the curse of Durvāsa causing the king to forget his own past action, forcibly reminds us of man's highest power of appreciation of nature being lost to him only by the influence of some curse in a previous birth. Otherwise, the poet cannot account for the world being too much with us and our senses being out of tune with nature. Some of the choicest samples of Sanskrit poetry have found a home in this great play. Many a gem of purest ray serene the unfathomed art of Kālidāsa may yet disclose. He seems ever fresh and ever young, and lends himself to the closest examination from critical minds of both the West and the East. If a German poet like Goethe felt wonder-struck at Kālidāsa's poetic mind and profound art, our own Tagore proffered a fresh interpretation of the play of *Śakuntala*. Others there have been who have delved into the many aspects and branches of knowledge which made of Kālidāsa's mind a marvel to the world.

Vikramorvaśīya is the other play of Kālidāsa where we again confront the meeting of earth and heaven.

King Purūravas falls in love with Urvaśī, the heavenly dancer. The bliss of heaven is evanescent, even as Urvaśī is. The search for Urvaśī forms the main subject-matter for one full scene and there are enough indications in that scene of Kālidāsa's mind being deeply saturated with Vālmīki. Urvaśī's character is drawn in distinct contrast to the other two heroines of Kālidāsa, Śakuntalā and Mālavikā. Indelible imagery and chiselled language fill this play to the brim and great passages occur where Nature's beauty is expressed in terms of human personality, reminding us of the peculiarly Indian thought—never feeling any distinction between Nature and Man even in drawing poetic similes.

The third play, *Mālavikāgnimitra*, has been conceived of in an entirely different manner. The story no doubt is not original of theme, for it deals with the usual type of love we come across in other Sanskrit dramas. But Kālidāsa's artistic soul shows how it can make it an occasion for collecting thoughts upon the sister arts of music and the dance. The second act is full of fine suggestions of Kālidāsa's deep knowledge of the art of dancing. Perhaps the very novelty of introducing such a scene made the poet exclaim even at the outset of the play that "nothing should be overrated because of its long familiarity or nothing derided because of its novelty."

HARSA OR HARSAVARDHANA. (7th Century A. D.). He was the son of Prabhākara Vardhana and Yaśovatī. Himself a renowned ruler of Kanauj, he left a very distinguished name in Indian history for both his administrative ability and his literary talents. Great poets like Mayūra, Bāṇa, Divākara and others orna-

mented his court. We owe this information to certain traditional accounts current. Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa also confirms the great reputation of Harṣa.

Three of Harṣa's plays, *Ratnāvalī*, *Priyadarśikā* and *Nāgānandam* are all very popular. *Ratnāvalī*, based upon an episode of Vatsarāja's life, is only of four acts and the play is short. The same type of story as in *Mālavikāgnimitra* is handled by the poet here, though the incidents are different, and Vāsavadattā, the Queen, is not as self-denying as Dhārīṇī of the other play. Still the play is enjoyable for its many love-tricks and turns, and the *Vidūṣaka* or court-jester keeps up the liveliness. Critics like Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta never ignore the *Ratnāvalī* as a specimen of dramatic art. Kṣemendra's *Lalitāratna Mālā* was based upon *Ratnāvalī*, which fact is mentioned by himself in the *Aucitya-vicāra Carcā*. *Priyadarśikā* is another of Harṣa's plays which has nothing individual about it either in plot or in execution. *Nāgānandam* alone of Harṣa's three plays deserves greater appreciation because of the introduction of an episode of self-sacrifice within a plot of the usual love variety. Jīmūtavāhana, the Prince in the play, after his wedding with Malayavatī, his sweetheart, prepares, even while the marriage festivities are in full swing, to give away himself to Garuḍa, in the place of Śankhacūḍa, a Nāga youth. The moving episode of the sudden seizing upon him of pity at the sight of a mother wailing over her son's impending death is very dramatically portrayed.

The benediction verse at the opening of the play is in praise of Lord Buddha and it lends support to some who imagine Harṣa's religion to be Buddhism.

But there are other verses in the play which describe Pārvatī and Śiva also and therefore no conclusive proof can be made out from internal evidence as regards the religion of the author.

Certain defects no doubt mar this play. The language is not always perfect. Moreover, certain references to music in the first act have no point at all. One version says that Harṣa was not himself the author of the three plays, but some one else whom he patronized at his court. No doubt facts prove Harṣa's munificence to poets like Dhāvaka and the story gains currency that Dhāvaka himself might have been the author of the reputed three plays of Harṣa.

VIJJIKA. She was a poetess whose name retains its Prākṛtic form. The Sanskrit name might have been *Vijayā*. She must have lived about the 5th or 6th century. The name of the play she wrote was *Kaumudī Mahotsava*. The title, given to it by its editors, is not inappropriate to the subject. The original name given to it by its author is not clear. The theme contains incidents connected with a King called Sundaravarman who gets defeated in battle at the hands of his enemy but soon recovers the lost throne through his son, with the aid of a Minister, Mantragupta. The drama is believed to have been enacted by players before the victor King himself, and hence the appropriateness of the title. Even the author's name as Vijjikā could have remained in the dark but for the light thrown by modern research scholars upon the subject. Apart from stray beautiful verses found in anthologies, which are recognized as hers, there is practically no clear evidence, according to some scholars, of her authorship of the

play mentioned above.

DINGNAGA. Scholars place this poet in the 5th century. The name Dhīra Nāga, referred to by writers on poetics in their treatises, may belong to the same poet. A third name of the same poet, Bhadanta, is also revealed by researchers.

His precious gift of a play, known by the name of *Kundamālā* contains six acts. His is not at all a laboured style and is never even ornamented. Plenty of moving passages in this play fill the hearts of *rasikas* with genuine joy. The play no doubt is based upon the *Uttarakāṇḍa* of Vālmīki and is very similar to the *Uttara Rāmacarita* of Bhavabhūti. But this delightful writer moves us to pity even at the very outset when Sītā in pregnancy is driven in a chariot by Lakṣmana to the forest, to be left there by Rāma's direction. As the curtain rises upon the scene Sītā exclaims: "Pray, Lakṣmana dear, drive slowly. I feel the discomfort of the jolting." Nothing more is needed to supply the imaginative reader with deep emotion at the gloomy prospects before Sītā. Lakṣmana's mental conflict is vividly portrayed. The play is thus a series of genuine emotions wrought with such a fine brush that no reader will ever complain of stereotyped effects of language or situation. Kālidāsa's elegance and Bhavabhūti's diction combine in some measure in this poet to make of his style a source of perennial pleasure. Normally readers may even suspect Bhavabhūti's desire to enrich *Karuṇa* or pathos in his *Uttara Rāmacarita* as derived mainly from Dingnāga's precedent. Mallinātha's reference in his commentary on the *Meghadūta*, to Dingnāga as a contemporary of Kālidāsa, supplies us with some justification for believ-

ing that if he was the same as the author of *Kundamālā* there could have been every possibility for some rivalry between these two writers. It is now considered by certain scholars that the manuscripts of this play only discover the name of Dhīra Nāga, described as Anūpa-rāja, as the author's real identity.

VISAKHADATTA. Placed by scholars somewhere in the middle of the 5th century, this poet produced a great drama called *Mudrā Rākṣasa*. The play has a unique contribution to make to dramatic art, in that an altogether new type of plot based on the Mauryan Chandragupta's conquest over the Nanda King was made the subject of the play. Historical no doubt this play is. But the plots and subterfuges employed by Cāṇakya, Chandragupta's friend and Minister, are highly original and truly portray the characteristics of the author of the *Artha Śāstra* of great renown. The tireless energy of Cāṇakya is depicted with great vividness and detail. At one place he is made to say "Whatever happens or is lost, let me not lose my brains." The signet-ring which alone helps Cāṇakya's endeavours to overthrow Rākṣasa, the Minister of Nanda, lends meaning to the title of the play.

Since the main *rasa* is heroism, all the various incidents seeking to enrich it prove interesting reading. There are practically no women characters and no subsidiary theme of love anywhere to relieve the picture of its grim seriousness.

BHATTA NARAYANA. This poet must have lived in the 6th or the early part of the 7th century, for Daṇḍin in his *Avantī Sundarī* mentions him as author of three important works. But the play *Veṇīśamhāra* is the

only one extant to prove his literary authorship.

Veṇīsamhāra deals with the *Mahābhārata* episode from the stage of Kṛṣṇa's appearance at Duryodhana's court as the ambassador of the Pāṇḍavās to the conclusion of the great war and Yudhiṣṭhira's coronation at Hastināpura. Heroism is again the chief sentiment or *rasa* portrayed in it and Bhīmasena is the hero thirsting for the blood of his mortal foe Duryodhana. The desire to avenge Draupadī's humiliation develops in Bhīmasena to huge proportions till it ends in the final defeat of Duryodhana, and with blood actually smearing Bhīma's hands he collects the loosened locks of Draupadī, who had vowed not to plait them till revenge was wreaked on those who had caused her deep anguish and humiliation. The play when enacted grips the audience owing to the tense situations introduced in it.

BHAVABHUTI. Scholars now place him in the reign of Yasovarman of Kānyakubja in the 8th century A. D. The poet's real name was Śrīkaṇṭha and the name Bhavabhūti must have been adopted by him as his literary cognomen. He lived in Padmapura and was born of parents named Nīlakaṇṭha and Jatukarṇī. Erudite student of the Śāstras and savant as he was, he was fond equally of poetry. The grace of the Goddess of Speech fell on him as evidenced in his mature poetic mind and high-class literary style. Dignity of language and profundity of observation mark him out a poet of eminence second only to Kālidāsa. He lacks the mellifluousness and bright naturalness of the latter so far as style is concerned; but none can gainsay the attributes of Bhavabhūti being of a sufficiently high

order to remind us of his claim to be compared with Kālidāsa alone among classical poets. Because of his enormous scholarship he could not escape the influence of the Śāstras in his observations. A certain amount of preparation on the part of the student of Sanskrit will be necessary to be able to absorb Bhavabhūti's ideas and terse expressions. Perhaps, much of a ready response to his poetry and adequate recognition of his merit were denied him while he was living, for he broke out thus in one of his works: "Some day, someone may be born with a mind like mine."

Bhavabhūti's three plays are very familiar to all Sanskrit lovers. Scholars are not divided at all in their acclamation of his *Uttara Rāmacarita* as the diadem of his achievements. There are some literary critics who opine that *Uttara Rāmacarita* has hardly any equal in the whole gamut of dramatic productions in Sanskrit, inclusive of Kālidāsa's. So much so that a story is current among scholars of the traditional type that Kālidāsa made the following confession openly at the court: "Among playwrights of renown, I and Bhavabhūti will always rank among the best. But if *Uttara Rāmacarita* be taken into account, Bhavabhūti alone will rank higher."

The mellowed mind is perceptible in the *Uttara Rāmacarita* in almost every passage and verse. Some may experience a bit of weariness from the long descriptions and the somewhat heavy style. But the mind of Bhavabhūti in elevating Rāmacandra as swayed only by considerations of the highest and the everlasting traits of man makes us ponder deeply over the philosophy behind Rāma's act in abandoning Sītā to the

forest. In making Sītā say that Rāma's love for her would never be the less for this glaring betrayal by her lord of such faith as she had reposed in him, the poet warns us no doubt against rushing to a severe condemnation of Rāma's character. Rāma shows a rare strength of mind in withstanding the anguish born of his own determination to sacrifice his dearest in order to save the honour of his race and the integrity of his people.

Pathos in the hands of Bhavabhūti would move even stones to melt. He gives expression in this very play to how *Karuṇa* or pathos alone is of the highest merit among the *rasas* that poets employ.

Mahāvīra Carita is the treatment in dramatic form of Śrī Rāmacandra's life from start to finish up to his coronation. *Vīra* or heroism proper is the chief motif of the play, which seems a necessary preliminary to the *Uttara Rāmacarita*. *Mālātī-Mādhava* is a play of ten long Acts with a plot of the poet's own creation. It is to some extent not truly original inasmuch as the dramatist exhibits extraordinary skill in exploiting Vātsyāyana's *Kūmasūtra* for the application of love's infinite preoccupations to the story of two youthful lovers meeting by chance and growing in their love day by day. Critics often feel that this play is somewhat protracted beyond the usual limits. Indeed, if portions of the descriptive passages are deleted, the play will present a charming love plot for effective acting.

MAYURAJA OR ANANGAHARSA MATRA RAJA. He was a poet king said to have ruled the country of Ceḍi. His date is not very clear, though some critics feel that Harṣa's *Ratnāvalī* was probably modelled on this poet's *Tāpasa-Vatsarāja*, a play to his credit. Another play

Udātta Rāghava dealing with the story of Rāma is also ascribed to him. But *Tāpasa-Vatsarāja* has earned greater reputation, for Abhinavagupta too speaks of it with respect. If the fact of *Ratnāvali* having been modelled on this play is correct, then this poet must be deemed of an earlier period than Harṣa.

SAKTIBHADRA. *Āścarya Cūḍāmaṇi* is a play claiming this poet as its author. Tradition alleges the author's close association with the great philosopher, Śaṅkara. We can, therefore, place him somewhere after the 8th century. The play contains the episode of Sūrpanakhā's love-making to Rāma and the efficacy of a Cūḍāmaṇi or jewel which Sītā had secured from Anasūyā. The author having hailed from the Deccan, he should have had possibilities of coming closer to Śaṅkara. This play is much in vogue in Malabar where the Cākyaṛ performers select this particular piece for enactment.

MURARI. The date of Murāri is still a matter for conjecture alone. He is assigned to the latter half of the 8th and the first part of the 9th centuries. Murāri's name is familiar even otherwise by his work in the field of Śāstras. *Anargha Rāghava* is a play from his pen dealing with episodes connected with Rāma. His erudition and rugged style are enough to break anybody's resolve to go through the drama to the finish. But scholars have always regarded him as a fine specimen of scholarship and industry. He was known, by a title conferred on him, as Bāla Vālmiki.

KSEMISVANA. *Caṇḍakaśika*, a play dealing with the tragic account of King Hariścandra, owed its authorship to this poet. On account of the valuable theme, many situations lend themselves to dramatization. The

poet was gracing the court of King Mahīpāla of Kānya Kubja. *Naiṣad-ānanda* is another play tracing its origin to his pen. He is surmised to have lived some time in the 9th and 10th centuries.

RAJASEKHARA. Scholars have placed him in the earlier part of the 10th century. He was preceptor to Mahendrapāla and was the court laureate in the reign of his successor Mahīpāla. He was a playwright of note in that he gave to the world four or five plays like *Bāla Rāmāyaṇa*, *Bāla Bhārata*, *Viddhaśāla Bhañjikā* and *Karpūra Mañjarī*. The first of the above plays contains ten acts dealing with the story of Rāma. He has changed the story in order to suit it to dramatization. The next play *Bāla Bhārata* is available now though incomplete. Another title of it is *Pracaṇḍa Pāṇḍava*. *Viddhaśāla Bhañjikā* is a shorter play of only four acts. The story is very tame in that a king begets a son, who marries a princess and settles down as the ruler after his father. *Karpūra Mañjarī* is a Prākṛt play of the Saṭṭaka variety. Another drama named *Ratna Mañjarī* is also ascribed to the same author.

There is a play named *Mahānāṭaka*, whose authorship is still unidentified. There are not sufficient marks of a drama about this book. Most of it is in the form of verses. Verses from various different sources are strung together under a single title. A strange story says that Hanumān of *Rāmāyaṇa* fame originally wrote the work and that Vālmiki became jealous of him and threw the work into the sea. It is something that the drama itself is not lost; scholars are willing to place it in the 10th century.

VYASADASA. Otherwise known as Kṣemendra, he

was a poet whom we had occasion to discuss in earlier sections in connection with his theories on poetics. Because of his voluminous writings he earned the title of Vyāsādāsa. Kṣemendra's date is the 11th century according to research scholars.

VIGRAHARAJA DEVA. He was the author of a short drama called *Hara Keli*. The subject of the play is the battle between Arjuna and Maheśvara, when the former goes to him for the *Pāśupatāstra*. The play itself is found inscribed on a rock in Ajmer and the date according to it is 1163 A. D.

SOMADEVA. He was the author of *Lalita Vigharāja*. This play is also inscribed on a rock. The 12th century is said to have claimed him and he being a contemporary of Vigharāja wrote the work in honour of the King himself.

JAYADEVA. *Prasanna Rāghava* is a play by this author. The victory of Rāma over Paraśurāma forms the theme of an act in this play. In the scene where Paraśurāma meets Rāma we have a battle of wits between Paraśurāma and Lakṣmaṇa. Punning upon words, known as *Śleṣa*, is much in evidence in this work. Bengal scholars identify this author with Pakṣadhara Miśra, the renowned *Tārṅikā* scholar. Jayadeva is fixed in the 13th century. He is doubted to be the Jayadeva who wrote the *Gīta Govinda*, because of the extreme variance in style between the latter and this play.

Between the 12th and the 15th centuries a number of poets who claim attention for play-writing are mentioned. Prahlādana, Madana, Rāmabhadra, Ravi Varman, Rudra Deva, Mānikka Varman, Jaya Malla

Deva, Rāmendrāvāsa and Jīvarāma are some of the noteworthy writers of the period.

BALAKAVI. From the reign of the Cochin Ruler Rāma Varma (1537-1561) with whom he was associated, this poet's period is ascertained. But he hailed from a village named Mullandram in North Arcot. That village is famed for giving birth to many other scholars of repute. Guru Rāma Kavi, the author of *Ratneśvara Prasādanam* was also born in that village. Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita in his *Nalacarita Nāṭaka* mentions Bālakavi as of significance. *Ratnakelūdayam* is a play ascribed to him.

RAMABHADRA DIKSITA. He was the author of the well-known *Jānakī Parinayam*. It is evident from the title that the story of Sītā's wedding should form the theme of this play. Still the author has invested the play with situations of his own contrivance in introducing scenes like the one where two sets of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Viśvāmitra baffle the readers, who find very enlivening the comedy of errors resulting from this situation. The wedding of Jānakī takes place in Viśvāmitra's hermitage. Rāvaṇa impersonating Rāma and his two accomplices taking the rôles of Lakṣmaṇa and Viśvāmitra, meet the real Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Viśvāmitra, when confusion arises causing unending scope for laughter and surprise.

Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita lived in Tiruvisanallore, a village on the banks of the Cauveri in the Tanjore District, justly famed for its illustrious roll of scholars and poets. Both Kuṭṭi Kavi and Veda Kavi, two other renowned scholars and poets, came from this same village. Rāmabhadra is said to have flourished in the

17th century; he was famed also for his other poetical works.

JAGANNATHA KAVI. He graced the court of Prince Saraboji of Tanjore in the 18th century. *Ratimanmatham* or "The Love of Rati and Manmatha" is a play from his pen. *Śṛṅgāra* is the chief *rasa* of the play. The play describes Rati's being abducted by Sambara, a demon, and Manmatha's conquest over Sambara and the final union between Rati and Manmatha are dramatized here. In the *Prasthāvana* or prologue of this play, there is a significant verse which needs a bit of detailing here. The poet says:—

Some fall a prey to mere beauty of words. Others seek shades of meaning in them. Some others always desire a happy blending of meaning and language. One can even satisfy all such requirements. But to supply to the brim *Rasa* is a task not easy of fulfilment by everybody.

Aware as he was of his own limitations, he did not fall far short of his ideal. *Vasumatī Parīṇaya* is another of his plays.

KRSNA DATTA, VISVANATHA and **KRSNANATHA** are all of minor importance in the roll of dramatists who flourished later than the 18th century.

ASVINI TIRUNAL or **RAMAVARMA VANCE YUVARAJA** of Travancore gave to the literary world dramas like *Rukmiṇī Parīṇaya*, *Śṛṅgāra Sudhākaram*. They both belong to the 18th century.

GOVARDHANA YUVARAJA of Cranganore also contributed his royal share to the harvest of dramas of this period. His play is named *Rasa Sadanam*.

KOCHUNNI TAMBIRAN or **KAVI SARVA-BHAUMA** produced two plays of the *Bhāṇa* variety entitled

Anaṅgavijayam and *Śṛṅgāra Vijayam*. He is generally placed in the 19th century

More than a century and a half have now elapsed since Western contacts have influenced greatly our literary vision and writing. The 19th and the 20th centuries may not be compared favourably with earlier periods for their output of first-class Sanskrit works in general and much less in the field of poetry and drama. But we feel proud to point out that still Sanskrit has proved a flexible vehicle to ardent lovers of the language, who in spite of English education have not completely ignored their heritage or failed to write in Sanskrit.

NADUKKAVERI NARAYANA SASTRIN. He was a poet of some merit who lived up to 1911. His writing is expressive. He was famed for off-hand versification. He is said to have performed the feat of finishing off a hundred verses in fifty minutes, when challenged by an opponent. He wrote a number of plays too. Ninety-two of them are said to be known, though not all of them have been printed. *Maithilīyam*, *Śarmiṣṭā Vijayam* and *Kalivibhūṣaṇam* are noteworthy among his dramas. Bhaṭṭa Śrī and Bāla Sarasvatī are honorifics conferred on him for his scholarship and poetic talents. He was an eloquent speaker in Sanskrit. A poem by him, by name *Ācārya Vijayam*, treating of the great Śaṅkara's life, and a prose work called *Gaurī Vilāsa* are well recognized by the world of letters in Sanskrit.

SUNDARA RAJA ACARYA. He was also a nineteenth-century poet whose talents won the patronage of Kerala Varman of Travancore. The Zamindar of Ettayapuram also gave to him of his patronage and

munificence. We owe to this poet a social play of the *Rūpaka* variety by name *Śnuṣā Vijayam*. Though the common theme of the quarrel between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law has found favour with this writer, we cannot be insensible of the purpose of the author in trying to reform the domestic life of most of the Southerners. There is not really enough of a humorous element in it to include it in the category of farces.

MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA LAKSMANA SURI. We have had occasion to mention his name in an earlier chapter. His prominent work in the field of play-writing is called *Paulastya Vadham* and deals with an episode from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. He wrote other works which have earned for him recognition from eminent Sanskrit lovers.

RADHAMANGALAM NARAYANA SASTRIN. He was a more naturally gifted composer in Sanskrit, but none of his works of any substantial value is preserved in print. He earned the honorific of Medhā Śrī. He tried all kinds of literary compositions and many there are to show his incomplete attempts.

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Many other writers, who have either written smaller pieces or who have not sustainedly continued in the literary field of Sanskrit can be mentioned: Iccambāḍi Śrīnivāsācāriar, Pārtasārathy, Bhadrādrī Rāma Śāstrin, Padmanābha Ācārya, Saṅkara Lāl, Kṛṣṇan Tambi, Y. Mahāliṅga Śāstrin and a host of others. Some of them combine scholarship in English literature with deep knowledge of Sanskrit. In the list of English-educated Sanskrit writers, Mahāliṅga Śāstrin deserves appreciation for the natural ease with which he writes. *Prati*

Rājasūyam is a drama in Sanskrit from his pen which rightly earned recognition and the award of a prize from the Madras Samskr̥ta Academy, presided over by no less great a savant and scholar than the late Mahāmahopādhyāya S. Kuppusvāmi Śāstrin. Again, the same author wrote a farce called *Kaunḍinya Prahasanam* which takes a familiar story of the South for its theme. Among research scholars, Dr. V. Raghavan has to be mentioned for combining in himself erudition and literary talent.

WRITERS OF ALLEGORICAL PLAYS. Other writers there have been who have chosen the religious field for enriching by their output. Thus the *Prabodha Candrodayam* of Kṛṣṇa Miśra, the *Amytodayam* of Gokula Nātha, the *Mohaparājayam* of Yaśopāla and the *San̥kalpa Sūryodayam* of Veṅkaṭanātha (Vedānta Desika) sail within our ken, reminding us invariably of the element of allegory and abstract thought employed to good purpose in dramatic writing.

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Chapter IX

SANSKRIT POETRY

I.—DESCRIPTION IN SANSKRIT POETRY

Literature is said to mirror life. All that we see around us gets reflected in it. We know such reflections cannot be the actual substance of things. Still they are not the same as objects reflected in a glass or a mirror. For instance, if the movements or actions of a mother hastening towards her mischievous child who has smeared his face all over with sand and dirt only to hug him forcibly to her bosom were to fall in a mirror, nobody can assert that they will not be different from a vivid description of the same scene in the pages of literature. Far from being a shadow or an unsubstantial reflection, the whole scene in literature will revive emotions in the reader's heart as if every bit of it were truer than life itself. So we say that poetry can be more fascinating than reality, in spite of its being rooted in life.

Poetry gives to airy nothings a habitation and a name. The poetic language makes an idea glow with many tints and we are impressed with that vision in the poet which alone has clothed it in so attractive a garment. Imagine a fine rose or a bunch of fresh

roses lying on a wooden table. The beauty of the rose may lose much against the wooden background. One would have even preferred to this the natural setting of the rose in the midst of its own leaves and thorns. But if, instead of the wooden surface to support the roses, a shining silver plate or vase be placed, ah! what a sudden change takes place, creating something totally different in our impression of the erstwhile less attractive thing! The polished vase will begin to reflect the tints of the roses on all sides in a peculiar manner and a fresh attraction will be added to the natural charm of the roses themselves. Now imagine in the place of the silver vase, poetic language and, of the roses, thoughts on life; then you will become conscious of a sudden change in the effect of the same observations on life assuming a colourful picture.

So imagination is everything in poetry. Like wind to the sails, like water to the river, imagination is essential to make a thing lasting in the memory of man. Without a rich imagination, a piece of good writing will remain like a flower without fragrance. But imagination is not a constant commodity and can vary according to individual capacity. Each one in a crowd can react to the same object in different ways. If, say, Lord Kṛṣṇa were to enter Dvārakā as a victor after conquering his enemies, the crowds gathered around him might feel about him in as many ways as they chose. The old men might think: "Ha, here comes the dear Lord who came instantly to save the elephant Gajendra from the evil clutch of the crocodile. Likewise may He liberate us from our own afflictions." We can picture the feelings of the maidens of the jubilant city express-

ed thus : " There goes he, the stealer of all hearts ! Will he not cherish us all even as he does Lakṣmī, the fickle-minded one ? " What about the children of the city ? They too might reflect thus : " Our dear friend the cowherd Kṛṣṇa has returned home. Hereafter there will be no end to our mirth and laughter. "

But the imagination of a poet is different in that it has not the usual limitations of ordinary persons of the type mentioned above. The flights of his fancy and the depth of his feeling range over the entire universe, as it were, and fail not to touch many a heart in many a clime. The more universal his language, the wider the audience he secures for his writings.

But in expressing beauty there can be as many ways and methods as there are individuals. Just as all rivers flow to the sea, so all poetic expressions point to the same meaning. Each such river coursing down to the sea has her own curves and sweeps, her own cascades of delight and waterfalls of vigour. Imagine a dark night described by poets. The inky depths of the night have to be vividly portrayed to a reader. Here language adopts imagery that serves the purpose fully. One poet says : " Dark rolling masses of clouds cover the entire sky. The stars are all blotted out of sight. Darkness reigns supreme over sky and earth. Indeed one's own body is invisible to one who has got to go in this darkness. " Another, let us imagine, describes the same scene with fewer words and perhaps more effectively : " Ha, darkness seems to splash itself against us and stick to every limb of our bodies. The sky rains collyrium itself from its depths ! " In this bit of heightened effect, we get the picture of the night much

better. A third poet provokes even more thought by the suggestion implied in his description of the same night: "What darkness! It resembles the very heart of a murderer. We find no glimmer of light anywhere to relieve it."

Poetic language revels in imagery and word-pictures without which our minds may feel no wonder in it. Even as the seven notes with their thousandfold manipulations give shape and colour to infinite varieties of *rāgas*, even as symbolism and art-sequences invest *Bharata Nāṭya* with limitless scope for representation of *Bhāvas*, so also alluring imagery and thought-suggestions make of a poet's language something that has an individuality of its own and something which feeds our inner craving to reach the limitless in thought.

Not having tried to understand the individual language that each art employs, it will be utter folly to complain of its lack of appeal to us. Without special training for and initiation into every one of the fine arts, we cannot be equal to receiving any intimation from it. A simile for instance is a figure of speech which commonly confronts us in poetry. Without adequately realizing its function, one should not complain of its frequent occurrence in many a poem and piece of literary writing. If Rāma's heart is described as being as expansive as the sea and his moral grandeur as being as imposing as the Himalayan heights, the language of poetry claims, by introducing such a simile for every one of the attributes of Rāma, to have satisfied the understanding heart. Certainly, to dissect poetic language by ordinary understanding and to complain that the size of Rāma's heart is nowhere near

that of the sea or that his moral stature is not anywhere near the height of even a hill, is to miss totally the meaning of poetic expression. On the other hand, to one saturated in imaginative expressions, anything less than fine images can hardly leave an indelible impression of a description. In the same way, to describe Vālmiki a metaphor or a phrase such as "The Vālmiki-Kokil" is employed, and a whole vista opens out to us, who have drunk deep of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, disclosing all the sweetness and flow of poesy from the true poetic throat.

In the same manner, other figures of speech have gained ground in poetic language, making the meaning more and more vivid to one who tries to realize the thing described. An illustration alone can give us exactly what poets gain in supplying language with such figures of speech. Let us imagine two friends entering a new city and reaching the heart of it, where stands a palace with a beautiful balcony overhanging the spacious grounds that adjoin the King's highway. A maiden in youthful bloom is seen on the balcony and below are found young fellows skulking about and beholding her from vantage spots hidden from sight. One of two visitors to the city exclaims: "Look yonder there, the moon has arisen! The *chakoras* are hovering around to feed upon the moonbeams. Yet what a bright full moon! It has no marks on its face in the usual shape of a deer. But why, why has the moon descended on earth?" The description points to the resemblance of the maiden's face to the full moon. But it has not stopped with that alone but has indulged in a bit of exaggeration by saying this moon is free of the dark spots, dwelling on earth, etc. The youths skulking in corners are compared

evidently to the birds which feed on the moonbeams. The poet's idea gets slowly divulged to us in his description employing so many figures of speech. From an attempt to compare the maiden's face to a moon the poet's intense imagination begins to identify the face and the moon as one. Once we enter into his world of imagination, the rest of his language of imagery in the piece becomes quite normal and even necessary to convey his emotions.

II.—NATURE IN SANSKRIT POETRY

The universe we speak of or the vast phenomenon that is observed by us is composed of *Prakṛti* or nature and *Caitanyam* or spirit. Without spirit within, nothing in *Prakṛti* or natural phenomena stirs us in the least degree. With this as basis we can venture upon the vast sea of knowledge or of inference to say that there must be an ultimate Reality behind all that we see around us. That is said to be *Ātman* or Absolute Truth which is one and indivisible though appearing to the normal eye as many and all.

Man alone being the most gifted among God's creations feels his condition as exclusive and apart from the rest of God's children, the animals and the plants. But it is a special gift of our ancient civilization that it has from times immemorial sought to bridge the difference between man and nature and even succeeded in such a mission. The poets of the epics and the much earlier sages of the Upaniṣads invariably spoke of the oneness of all life. Indeed, both man and nature try to supplement and complement each other in fulfilling the needs of a greater integration, which is known as

ultimate Realization.

Indeed Kālidāsa among the classical poets has inimitably brought out the kinship between nature and man when he causes his Śakuntalā to explain to her girl-friends, who complain of the unkind father that enjoined the watering of plants upon a fragile creature like her: "I am not watering these plants because of my father's behests. I am myself drawn to them who are kin to me in their affection." Again in the scene where she departs from the groves of penance to her husband's house, she fondly goes to the jasmine creeper to have her last embrace of it. Then, Kaṇva, the Sage, breaks out, "Rightly you have done. For I know what sisterly feeling holds you both in close bonds." But leave alone Śakuntalā who has her affinities with the plants of the hermitage; what about Kaṇva the Sage? He too thinks of his only adopted daughter in terms of the forest creeper. For he observes in satisfaction with Śakuntalā's marriage with Duṣyanta thus: "Just as yonder jasmine creeper leans for support upon the mango tree, so have you, my daughter, chosen the most proper of persons for your spouse." To dispense with this kind of observation as a mere artifice of language or to deem it foolish of a sage to have considered his daughter's welfare in the same terms as that of a forest creeper, is to ignore the poet's own pregnant suggestion. Especially those persons who have themselves advanced some steps on the wholesome pathway of universal brotherhood, this passage of the poet may not strike as insignificant or artificial. The truth of universal love cannot be better experienced or explained than by such beautiful situations or sentiments. And

Kālidāsa was a master in creativity. Hence it is that we receive unfailingly the norms of a seer's vision in Kālidāsa's poetic creations.

If man befriends nature, nature too cannot be insensible of man's good feelings. Kaṇva's hermitage with its fauna and flora looks sorrow-stricken at the departure of Śakuntalā, their darling companion. Trees shed their leaves, peacocks abandon their dances and the deer its mouthful of grass. Everything seemed to feel for her as the hour approached for her leaving the hermitage. In one verse of *Śakuntala* the passage runs thus :—

She who never drank till she had watered you, who could never brook one little offshoot or flower being culled from your stems, whose jubilation was at its height on seeing you in your season of bloom, she, that Sakuntala, wants to leave you all today and may you all give her farewell.

These are words of the Sage Kaṇva addressing the forest trees and creepers.

Bhāsa too in his *Pratimānāṭaka* introduces a scene where Rāma calls upon Sītā to bid farewell to all the trees of the forest which she had reared up, watering them with her own hands. In another drama of Bhāsa's, we find maidens unable to bear the pain of seeing flowers forcibly separated from their stems.

Diṅnāga in the tense situation where Lakṣmaṇa has to abandon Sītā alone and forlorn in the jungle makes Lakṣmaṇa burst out : " Alas ! the very trees drop their tears in the shape of flowers at this cruelty of mine. "

Dr. Tagore in his " Message of the Forest " pertinently remarks that in Western dramas nature appears like a guest shy and reticent, while in the minds of

Eastern writers nature freely mixes with man and beast and seems to stand on no formality with either. Nature comforts and confides in man. We see in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* the Asoka tree blooming all over at the sight of the lovers' hearts unfolding their petals. The Queen Dhārinī relents on seeing nature's evident approval of true love's ways. Sanskrit poets have never shown poverty of imagination in describing whole forests aflame with the season's flowers at the touch of love's magic wand.

It is a peculiar experience of Eastern poets that nature reminds them of human beings and their ways. If Kālidāsa sees a river flowing fast and foaming at its edges, he is reminded of Urvaśī leaving her lover with hasty steps, the fringes of her garment quivering. Lotus pools with fresh-blown lotuses remind our poets of damsels all radiant in their bloom of youth. An elephant-calf's play reminds another of a frolicsome child tugging at its mother's arms. Again a cloud settling on a mountain top reminds Kālidāsa of the sport of elephants when they bump against the mountain side. The half-opened buds about a bush make a poet imagine a girl smiling with dimples in her cheeks. The bees round the white blooms appear to him as the curls round her forehead.

III.—POETIC SUBJECTS

However much a poet impresses us by the beauty of his imagery and the facility of his style, if his subject strikes us as devoid of merit or of poetic vision we naturally get tired of his writing. A proper theme alone makes a poet sustaining to the last. We know

the present-day novel of the Western type, satisfying us with its plot and its intricate situations. We know also that Sanskrit writers hardly equalled these modern artists in their range of originality regarding plot. We have already given some reasons why in poetry and drama the ideal alone came in for delineation by Sanskrit poets. They never attempted the novel or the short story which stun us today by their infinite variety and gripping realism.

Economy in art is what contributes to an uncommon impression on us when we view the things which go to make a piece of writing enjoyable to a degree. Realistic situations and the minutest details of plot are really worth while for an artist to press into his service, but if he lacks vision of the main purpose of a literary piece, whether a novel or a drama, all the rest of his powers may not avail him to create lasting impressions. If a musician brings out in clear outlines by a few strokes of imagination a *rāga* in full, it does not matter if he is a little defective even in his *svaram* manipulations while developing them. But if, while his *svara* singing is quite flawless of execution, he betrays lack of definition and *rāga bhāva*, then he cannot be ranked high. Similarly in poetry, if a particular *rasa* a poet has chosen is not sustained properly, he may fail to move a *rasika* whose heart may not slake its thirst at the quickly drying springs of his figurative language and skilful dialogue.

If a painter has to represent a Gopī in love with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he draws the figure of a maiden in line and colour with a curd-pot on her head but with a gait representing her feet keeping measure to some distant

music that fills her ears and her soul. He makes her dance her way forgetful of the pot poised on her head. The little folds of her skirt and the curls of its fringes are enough to make the figure of the Gopī appear dancing on the canvas. Her closed eyes and her lifted lit-up face will tell us by what magic she has been ensnared within and by what strange disturbance her heart is stirred. If, instead of with these suggestive touches of imagination, the painter merely fills the entire canvas with details of numerous other objects in the foreground and the background, maybe they will even wean away the eye of the beholder from the very object the artist needs to have the onlooker concentrate his attention upon. An imaginative picture alone will take him beyond to regions which can be found nowhere painted on the canvas before him.

We should not miss the essential in literature in our search for mere detail and realistic touches of a plot or story. If we forget the main purpose of all art in our fever for stimulation of senses and nerves, it may be like failing at a wedding to gaze at the couple who are being married but receiving our fill of satisfaction from the beautiful canopy overhead or the exquisite arrangements all round which no doubt might create a dreamland around us. Indeed, it will be a sad commentary on our powers of observation if we overlook the wedded pair but only behold the scene of the marriage and return home feeling our main purpose in attending the marriage has been fulfilled.

Many a poet of this land never made much of a fetish of an original episode or plot to work upon. Kālidāsa, no mean representative of the art of drama

and of poetry, ventured very little upon original themes. But in his hands even old and familiar stories gained freshness and beauty as in those of none other. At any rate in poetry and in drama a poet's imagination needs not much of an original plot to satisfy our artistic cravings. No doubt, the modern novel and short story cannot be thought of in the same manner, for they both depend upon the writer's freshness in divining varieties of situations and plots. Otherwise the realism in them will be deemed inadequate for supplying readers with any degree of satisfaction.

In the absence of attempts at such novel-writing and short-story production, our ancients did not appear wanting in their literary successes because of their inability to create themes from their own imagination. Moreover, their deliberate intent to choose a moral motive and a didactic purpose in both drama and poem have been already explained. Ānanda Vardhana, therefore, has sane advice to give to literary writers. He says :

Writers may experience difficulty in the creation of fresh themes for stories. Their deficiency in the inventive part of it may even take away the merit of a piece otherwise. Hence, better that they resort to the safer course of drawing upon known episodes and working upon them with all the wealth of their fancy and feeling and powers of portrayal. Further, the writer would do well to eschew such details as would block the way for the prime *rasa* emerging and satisfying all. Let them develop such points as would enrich the sentiment chosen for portrayal.

Ānanda Vardhana spoke wise words. Many of the later Sanskrit writers have tried to follow his advice.

It is no doubt both a strength and a weakness in all Sanskrit poets that they were conventional to this extent. In their zeal to paint only ideal lives and high ethical standards of character, they achieved considerable success in making their heroes live. But when it came to a question of photographic effects of realism in all its aspects, they failed miserably. They never cared to portray the many minute points that differentiated individual from individual psychologically as well as physically. They ignored such detailed or accurate workmanship as quite unnecessary and even as vain attempts to capture Nature's infinite and indefinable varieties and moods.

As in Indian art and sculpture, conventional types of heroes and heroines and stereotyped patterns or designs were proving sufficient for them to work upon for imparting their own fresh interpretations of life. In portraying what they sought as exemplary types they expended all their imaginative powers. On seeing, say, the *Tribhaṅga* poise of a sculptured statue we ask, why this unnaturalness? The artists are able to bring out wonderful distinctness in our impression of heroes and Gods by this deviation from normal anatomy. Similarly the conventional aspect in poetry may strike the modern mind as too jejune; but to a true *rasika* a wonder-world of form and content is, no doubt, produced in such a perfect yet conventionalized language. Maybe even a modern child may satisfy itself as having perceived a defect in an arm or a leg of an old painting here. Still it will be beyond anybody to correct it or set it right or change it without destroying that stretch of imagination and that sweep of ideas.

IV.—THE MESSAGE OF SANSKRIT POETS

Philistines there will always be who may object to statements like, "Poets are born to deliver their messages to humanity." True, to some extent poets do not always know why they sing. Like the kokil that spends a whole dawn filling the neighbourhood with its unrestrained flow of sounds, a poet never stops the strains of his unpremeditated art. It may all appear even without any definite aim. An unheeding world is sure to pass the poet by, imagining that for words of guidance and instruction a philosopher must needs be sought and not a mere juggler with words.

Well, one cannot deny a particle of truth in this kind of surmise; but we should remember that it is only a particle. For no poet feels, when the creative impulse seizes upon him, that the purpose of advice or admonition to the world should alone be his motive in writing poetry. He easily produces what others have to take perhaps years of mental discipline to utter with precision. Certainly, there is no harm if his words carry the thinking mind beyond what their apparent significance implies. For it is then alone that the poet is deemed to have given a message to humanity. However little simple minds may feel any real need for help from such messages, still they may find themselves helpless in their attraction to the simplicity of the words of a poet who contrives through such a device to reach their hearts. No doubt a poet sometimes fails to win over hearts if he adopts the direct or didactic method of preaching through his lines. One cannot always have a good word to say of a poet assuming the rôle of a moral

preacher. The imaginative mind really finds sustenance for its upward march only when the words uttered give it scope in turn for glimpsing its own meaning from a suggestion after careful study and introspective reflection.

The poet too draws his material from his own observation of life. But his eyes not only see but also develop vision. When such penetrative vision increases, the poet's comprehension becomes more and more expansive and far-seeing. The very objects that appear separate in the dark strike us in the light of day as having integrity and unity. Because the poet tries to synthesize what he has seen and tries to inculcate in us the oneness of all life, the reader also slowly perceives the need for living for the common good and not for individual gain alone. Differences pale into insignificance and the oneness of all life begins to shape itself before the seeing eye and the knowing mind. Indeed, as we have already had occasion to observe, poets in Sanskrit have constantly hearkened to that note of a synthetic perception of life and a universal purpose for man's journey on earth. They make man and Nature, beast and bird and every object in life live in perfect harmony with one another and aid in the realization of the Maker's great design. In other words, Sanskrit poets and writers clothe the same ideals preached by our Vedānta in the more attractive garb of story and song.

But all poets are not of the same level in their higher perception. Some may not have a peep into the beyond and so necessarily fall short of our conception of artists with enduring ideals. Consequently, they may

stir the passions of their readers to such an extent that these may not think of anything worth knowing apart from what is immediately before them. The extent to which such writers represent the environment and times they live in may lure the readers' hearts also. There may even be a sudden blaze of appreciation for their realistic art which mainly portrays or vivifies the conditions in which they live or the times they are passing through. Still the pearl-divers for thought, who wish to plumb the abysmal depths of Nature and of man, may find in literature of the kind above described, the shallowness of it all and its ephemeral values. The writers may after all earn only the gratitude of readers for their fanciful ideas and picturesque language.

On the other hand, what we term immortal poetry never satisfies itself with mere vividness of portraiture and cleverness of analysis. It strives to present a whole or comprehensive aspect of things underlying the Universe and enlarges man's view. And lo! creation widens before his eyes. He feels a changed creature after immersing himself in the rays of the never-setting flame of true poetry. He acclaims these great originators of thoughts and ideals as Mahākavis or great ones. In our country especially, we feel that in the writings of Mahākavis both the dreams of our Vedic seers and the constructive philosophy of our Śāstraic writers is realized in an ample measure.

In all countries and in all times many have earnestly tried in vain to woo the Muse of Poetry. It may be no exaggeration to say that now, for more than three centuries at least, Sanskrit literature has not been rich in really gifted poets. What we have during this period

as Sanskrit poetry is merely a feeble attempt to represent life as experienced by writers. The more the lines of these recent writers are scanned, the greater the impression left on us of their lack or immaturity of vision. And a class of readers also rose who began to feel satisfied with the jingle of words and the metallic ring of the lines. If at all there was a writer with faint traces of genuine poetic inspiration he was either left uncared for or deliberately despised for not penning showy or flowery language.

Naturally, therefore, with our conversance with Western lines of criticism, we of the English-educated generation became totally averse to studying real authors in Sanskrit, who are neither too few nor too distantly separated from each other. There grew up a feeling in us that either Sanskrit poetry always breathes too much of an other-worldliness or that its fountain source has been too greatly stirred to leave much of clarity as to a correct aim of art, namely, accurate representation or realism. Perhaps such criticisms and more of that type might all be justified, if Sanskrit writers had remained blind to what they saw around them or if they had merely entered the heavens with their branches of intellectual perception without having their roots in real life.

The fact cannot be denied that there are scores of Sanskrit authors who have dealt with philosophical speculations alone as their subjects. But at the same time we also cannot be absolved from irresponsibility in making surmises about the limitations of Sanskrit writers without ever having dived seriously into the vast ocean of Sanskrit literary writing of every conceivable

kind and character. The real students of Sanskrit literature have always held a different opinion of the gems of thought the fathomless ocean of their literature yields. Many subjects of material and immediate concern to our normal daily lives and many branches of literary expression find their treasures disclosed in the pages of our Sanskrit authors. Intimate topics of mundane happiness too, not to speak of scientific treatment of even such tabooed subjects as sexology and the art of enticement by courtesans have gained most minute elaboration at their hands. We marvel indeed at the many-sidedness of human intellect and the myriad-headedness of literary topics indulged in by Sanskrit writers.

Vālmiki, for example, was a forest sage and a recluse to boot. Still, when we open the pages of his *Rāmāyaṇa*, what a bewildering wealth of detail and of accurate observation confronts us in his description of Rāvaṇa's palace and his womenfolk! Not only do we deem his pen remarkable in its capacity for vividness but also for its poise in investing such descriptions with dignity of a rare kind. We even feel wonder at the sage's naturalness, as if he had been born to that kind of royal life and the environment of pleasure. One occasionally breathes, paradoxically enough, a kind of approving attitude of the sage towards that life with its varied diversions and sensory delights.

Kālidāsa, whom his own compeers esteemed as possessed of a singularly detached mind, has not spared himself in the prodigality of his account of Alakā, the city situated on the Himalayan heights. The Yakṣas residing there possess throats that ever and anon pour

forth soulful tunes. Their days and nights are spent in perennial pleasures. Only tears of joy course from their eyes; sorrow's cruel stains never touch the cheeks of their damsels. The only pain they experience is that caused by love's anguish and the only quarrel they can indulge in is that of lovers. Neither does age touches them nor decrepitude incapacitate their limbs. Costly palaces and pleasure gardens surround them. They drink with zest from both the cups of wine and the lips of their sweethearts.

Kālidāsa must have been inspired in his writings by a kind of philosophy of his own. Because of the many types of obstacles in the way of our enjoyment of life, Kālidāsa must have constructed an imaginary celestial city, where everything sought could be achieved and nothing enjoyed could produce satiety. So the Alakā of his imagination beckons us to all that man's desires can visualize in dreams alone. Kālidāsa can at the same time wave his magic wand in a different manner and throw the divine pair, Śiva and Umā, into a veritable frenzy of love. Neither was Kālidāsa, therefore, a poet of sensuousness nor a philosopher given to absolute renunciation.

Many another poet of renown has combined both austerity and sensuousness in his representation of Indian life. Persons who have the misfortune to know only one side of the picture cannot help swearing by what they have known and characterizing Sanskrit literature as either too erotic in substance or too philosophical of content. The reason for almost all our high-class poets adhering to the method of representing life in all its phases is their habit of following in the footprints of

the early classics. Synthesis is the chief pivot on which their imagination revolves, and, out of chaos and jarring elements too, harmony will sometimes be produced by their attempts.

Daṇḍin's *Daśakumāracaritam* contains a number of pages devoted to such topics as strategy in war, treasure-trove hunting, dice-play, courtesan life, the art of burglary, cock-fighting, etc. Śūdraka has given us ample evidences of his knowledge of life in all its aspects, ranging from the science of house-breaking to a device for dethroning kings not wanted by the people. Kṣemendra in his book on *Samaya Mātrkā* deals with courtesans and their practices. Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa's conception of royalty in its lavish taste and expensive setting cannot be surpassed in his account of Kādambarī's palace. Kālidāsa has no less enlivened generations of readers by his apt and accurate portraiture of the assemblage of kings in Indumati's *Svayamvara*. The commercial quarters and bazaar life achieve immense accurateness of detail when Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa sets apart a few pages in his *Vema-Bhūpāla Carita* for that purpose.

Sanskrit writers as a group can even be regarded as never having gone astray from the path laid for them by earlier pioneers. Purity of life and sweetness of experience are the twin posts to the arch of creativity through which their imagination marches forward. Art, according to them, cannot thrive without purity at its base as well as at its summit. The peace that comes of true understanding will be only a mirage to those whose hearts hunger for physical comfort and sensory pleasures from the pages of literature. Hence in our country

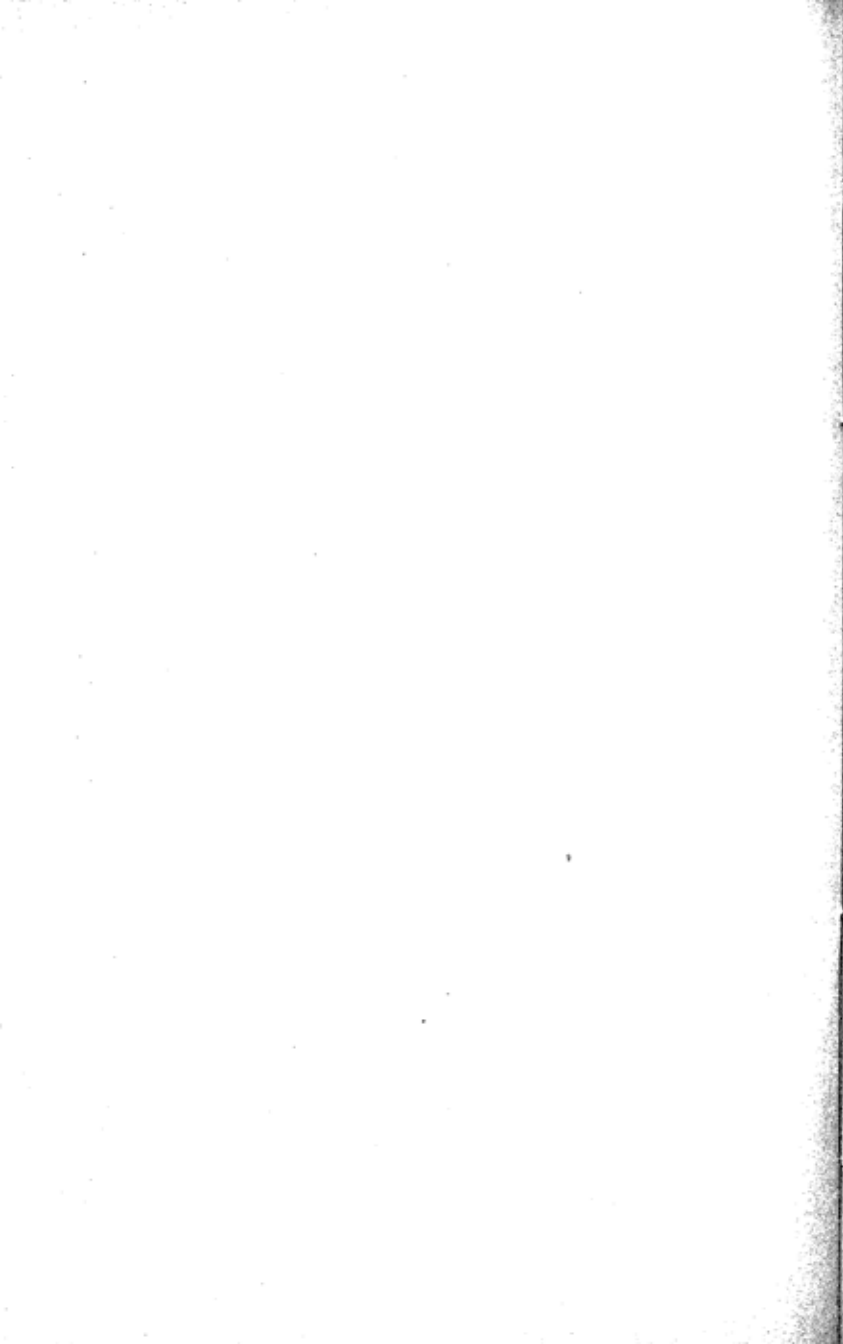
nothing of art or of artistic value can be found independent of its basic structure built upon Dhārmic principles. We know that our Dharma calls upon us to sprinkle on the floor of our houses rice flour in order to feed small insects like ants. Art aids it with its own designs and patterns that please the eye and enrich the taste. Art is a handmaid to righteous conduct in every kind of action in our domestic sphere too. Clothing and dress in the same manner become objects for satisfying the requirements of hygiene as well as of spirituality. Each of the folds which add beauty to the dress symbolizes a principle of spiritual attainment. If the uttered sound "Om" is deemed the channel leading to *Śabda Brahman* or the fundamental basis of all sounds, the art of music only regulates it in a series of notes ranging both towards higher and lower octaves thereby enhancing the artistic effects of sound. The voice achieves both purity and proportion with its systematic training along regulated channels which ultimately point to the source of all sounds, the *Nāda-Brahman*. In the same way the Universe, composed of many moving orbs, has a particular rhythm and restricted movement to maintain for all bodies that are drawn into that current. We educate ourselves and train our perceptions into attunement with that glory of movement, which is called the cosmic movement or dance. If that experience expresses itself in a limited physical movement, we call it the art of *Nṛtya* or dance. Every object too in Nature that seems to be devoid of a meaning and a purpose gains both, when perceived with a vision that is spiritual and non-physical. The tales that cluster round these natural phenomena become a regular source of interpretation

of life for the thinking mind.

Ancient wisdom, thus, has tried to knit life here with Life Supreme. When everything in the past contains immense spiritual values for us, how can a poet be born here without the influence of his past? Every fine art and science of æsthetics appears to him as pointing only the more vividly to the eternity which sages before him have seen or sung. In that way each art gets interlinked, so to say, with every other in its range as well as in its aim. If the sculptor has to gain perfection, music and the art of gesticulation have to be cultivated. If the dance has to be life-giving, certainly song and *Sāhitya* or literary form have to bear their share in the efficiency of its expression. If poetry recalls to the mind something of the sister arts, then only do we acclaim its author as of sufficient equipment to be ranked a classical writer. Moreover, if life has to be depicted in all its shades and tints, necessarily the fine arts must needs be reflected in what is written. Vyāsa thus makes the *apsarās* dance in order to supply us a vision of life in its richness. Kālidāsa provides us also with distinct evidence of his conception of a whole and rich life, when in his *Mala-vikāgnimitra* and *Vikramorvaśīya* he calls both dance and dramaturgy to his aid. Bhāsa in depicting the images of kings as so life-like shows how great a source of comfort and what an aid to recollection statuary can be. Letter-writing too finds a place, after painting, in the vital interests of a cultured life. In *Harṣa Carita* and *Kādambari* we have Bāṇa at his best unravelling the secrets of such arts as elephant training and steed-breaking. Statecraft is an attraction to which many

other writers like the author of *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* and *Svapnavāsavadattā* yielded. Even the building art gains recognition and explanation from some of these renowned writers of old. A peep into the architecture of *Mānasāra* will give us a wealth of details and technique pertaining to city and village construction.

To eschew, therefore, any of the other arts or to develop a literary mind as a single-track mind has never been the ambition of our Sanskrit writers. If at all they have succeeded nobly in anything, it is in their attempt to make life sumptuous in its tastes and detached in its outlook. True, not all of them can boast of any great vision in their writings; but they are at any rate not bereft of distinct marks of earnest striving after that singular aim of self-integration and comprehensive realization which alone can vouch a higher purpose in life to suffering humanity.



ANTHOLOGY



POETRY

DAWN

Hail, Dawn ! The light that announces you gradually
develops into daylight.

O Dawn ! You follow the Sun like a chaste woman her
lord, in spite of his wicked ways and wandering lust.
You do not leave him as would an ignoble wife
her husband.

(*R̥gveda* : *Aṣṭakam* 5 : *Maṇḍalam* 7 : *Adhyāya* V :
Sūkta 76 : *R̥k* 3)

Looking always towards the Universe she (Dawn) rose
and spread all round.

Having risen she robed herself in glowing raiment and
set out.

Thus golden-hued and pleasing everybody by her
radiance she inspires all living creatures of earth.

(*Ibid.* : *Sūkta* 77 : *R̥k* 2)

Thus born unseen she regains freshness every day,
driving away darkness before her.

But like a damsel without becoming coyness she struts
before the Sun as he emerges.

She thus informs us of the arrival of the Lord of Day.

(*Ibid.* : *Sūkta* 79 : *R̥k* 3)

TIME

The twin sisters (Night and Day)

weave the pattern of time,

Which is ageless, long and attached to six
pegs (six seasons).

Long threads are sent lengthwise (Night)

Other threads thrown out breadthwise (Day)

Thus the weaving is endless.

(*Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda : Brāhmaṇas : Kāṇḍa 2 :*

Chapter 5 : Section 5 : *Ṛk 7*)

THE FOREST

Aranyāni, O Aranyāni ! You look desolate and lost,
You never ask the whereabouts of the village in the
manner in which travellers enquire for the place
of their rest.

Are you not afraid of loneliness ?

As it rains, a bird twitters "*chi-chi*";
The other birds of the same feather answer back ;
It all seems like musicians singing tunes
In conformity to the drone of stringed instruments.
You are resplendent in that way.

As in the village fields here also animals graze about ;
Like houses in village streets the arbours of creepers
and bushes are formed here.

At sunset you seem to cart away all your fruits.

Cowherds call back the cattle with familiar sounds ;
Wood-cutters fell trees and shape the wood therefrom.

At nightfall the wayfarer stops under the shade of a
 tree and listens to your voice in the notes of birds.
 You do not harm anyone,
 And if the jungle denizens do not visit you you will
 never be fearful;
 Tasting the fruits you give, one can stay on in comfort
 here.

Your presence is fragrant with many scents ;
 You swell with grain crops without the aid of farmers
 tilling your soil.
 I thus extolled you, O Mother of all creatures !
 (*Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda* : *Kāṇḍa* 2 : Chapter 5 : Section 5 :
Rks 16-21)

SERENITY : CHARITY : RIGHTEOUSNESS

By self-control alone becoming serene of mind,
 people perform good deeds. Sages attain to Heaven by
 self-control. Control of mind stands four-square to all
 attempts against it. In self-control alone everything
 else exists. Therefore it is that control is regarded as
 the highest to be achieved.

Charity takes the best form of gifts in sacrifice.
 All beings depend upon the giver of things. Enemies
 are avoided by charity. Charity makes friends of people
 that hate. In charity alone everything else subsists.
 Therefore it is that charity is extolled as the highest to
 be obtained.

Dharma (Righteousness) is the pivot on which the
 Universe balances. The man of righteousness is acces-

sible to all. Righteousness wipes out all sins. In righteousness alone all things are found to exist.

(*Taittiriya Āraṇyaka* : Chapter 10 : *Anuvāka* 78)

THE WINDS

O Winds, gold-ornamented are your chests. When you move, the waters all become tasteful and medicinal herbs attain efficacy. O Winds that guide us! Wherever you help rains to pour down sweet water, there the crops of the fields grow healthy and the people attain efficiency of mind.

O Winds, send us clouds bearing rain! The rains will make crops of rice, *yava* and other grains thrive and also fill up rivers flowing downwards.

The noise of thunder shall shake the clouds into beneficent rains, just as a daughter will move her parents both to shower their gifts. The language of thunder accompanied by rains provides us with prosperity even as a wife in the company of her husband supplies food that is enjoyable.

(*Atharva Veda* : *Kāṇḍa* 6 : *Chapter* 3 : *Sūkta* 22 :
Ṛks 5-6)

THE SUN AND THE MOON

The Sun travels first. The Moon follows him. The Sun and the Moon both move, the one followed by the other. Of the two, the Sun alone looks at all the worlds. The Moon assumes fresh forms every day and creates fortnights, full months and seasons, six in number, like the Spring, etc.

O Moon! In the bright half of the month increasing every day by a digit, you appear fresh and fascinating. You aid the calculation of time. You are the sweet Regent of the sky during the nights. Waning and waxing, you please the heavenly crowd by arranging for their sustenance in the shape of sacrifices on earth. Thus described, you always grant us long life.
(*Atharva Veda* : *Kāṇḍa* 7 : Chapter 7 : *Sūkta* 86 : *Ṛk* 6)

REJECTION

While Sītā, Rama's spouse, spoke thus
Rāvaṇa, lord of the Rākṣasas and mighty of arms,
replied in unbecoming language.

" Know me, then, O Sītā, to be Rāvaṇa, head of the
Rākṣasas,
By whom all the worlds are awed into submission,
including the Devas, the Asuras and the people of
the earth.

" Seeing thee golden-complexioned and wearing the
silken bark of trees
I have lost my desire for my own women, O thou
faultlessly beautiful one !

" Of all the high-born women I have brought from
places far and near,
Thou shalt alone be honoured and deemed the chief
Queen.

" Laṅka my great citadel situated in the sea
Crowns the hill-top and is girt by the blue waters of
the sea.

"There, O Sītā, shalt thou sport in groves with me ;
Beautiful one, thou wilt no longer like this lonely forest
life.

"Five thousand slaves all decked in jewels will wait on
thee O Sītā, if thou wilt be my wife."

Thus Rāvaṇa spoke while Sītā's anger grew,
And she, the perfect of form, answered him in words
care-free.

"Like an unshakable mountain, like Mahendra himself,
Like the sea that can never be dried up is Rāma whom
I will follow.

"Handsome of person and expansive as the banyan,
True of heart and great of mind is Rāma whom I love.

"Strong of arms and lofty of mind, grand of gait like a
lion,
Even a lion among men and equal to a lion in strength
is Rāma whom I adore.

"With face shining like the full moon, the son of kings
and the master of bodily senses
Is Rāma widely famed and great of arms, whom I love.

"Well, then, like a he-wolf desiring the lioness, you
approach me, the unobtainable ;
You can never separate me from Rāma even as you
cannot the radiance from the Sun.

"As from the mouth of a lion hungry and wild,
As from the mouth of a poisonous serpent, you try to
extract the fangs.

"Mandara, great among mountains, you wish to lift
with your hands;

Drinking the direst poison Kālakūṭa, you wish to walk
away unaffected.

"You will hurt your eye with a needle; you will lick
the sword-edge with your tongue,
Should you wish to have Rāma's wife for yourself.

"Tying a stone round your neck you try to swim across
the waters;

With your hands you wish to pull out both the sun and
the moon from the sky.

"If you make overtures to Rāma's lawful wife,
You will be gathering only blazing tongues of fire with
your cloth.

"Should you desire to take away Rāma's blameless
wife,

You will only be treading the path of steel spikes.

"As between a lion and a fox

As between an ocean and a rivulet

As between the nectar of the heavens and rice-water

So yawns a gulf between Dasaratha's son and you.

"As there is betwixt gold and gilded metal

As there is between sandal paste and slush of earth

As there is between an elephant and a cat

So there is contrast between my Rāma and you.

"As between the crow and the king of birds, Garuḍa,

As between a fish-catcher and a peacock

“ As between a vulture and a swan
So does there exist dissimilarity between you and
Rāma.”

(*Rāmāyaṇa* : *Āraṇyakāṇḍa* : Canto 47)

THE BATTLE

The combatants both in battle, Lakṣmaṇa and Indrajit,
Attacked each other showering a rain of arrows ;

Covered each other again and yet again with powerful
missiles

Even as the Sun and the Moon on high get hidden
behind a screen of clouds.

Neither the pulling out of the dart from the quiver nor
the fixing of it to the bowstring nor the lifting of
the bow

Nor its delivery nor the drawing of the string nor the
holding of the bow stiff

Nor the keeping the missiles together in one handful nor
their speeding towards their aim,

Was at all visible owing to the skill of archery displayed.

When the arrows fast were released from the bow
And filled the space above the stars became hidden.

Lakṣmaṇa nearing Rāvaṇa's son and the other getting
closer to his enemy,

They both abandoned their respective posts in the
gathering heat of the fight.

Thus when missiles quick rained thick in the fray
The sky turned dark and dense with little interspace.

The myriad darts falling in sharp showers filled all the directions and even the corners of the earth.

Darkness reigned over all in fearful gloom
As, at sunset, night's inky cloak shrouds all.

Gushing pools of blood coursed in a thousand rills;
Wild beasts of prey bellowed their terrific howls.

The wind ceased to blow, the fire failed to burn,
The great sages all prayed for the world's safety.

Then at the four dark-hued steeds of the Rākṣasa, gold-
caparisoned,
Saumitri aimed his arrows four.

Another missile of the *Bhalla* kind, of sharpened edges,
From the bowstring drawn fully up to his ear, and
winged properly and shining well,

Hard as the bolt of the Thunder-God and resounding
like thunder,
Did speed from Lakṣmaṇa and kill the moving charioteer
of Indrajit.

Seeing his charioteer killed, the son of Maṇḍodarī of
great valour,
Took up the reins himself even as he did his strong bow
again.

His quickness drew the admiration of all ranged there;
And as he controlled the horses his person bore the
blows severe,

And as he defended himself his horses got the worse.

At places run through with arrows, Lakṣmaṇa further
aimed his missiles.

His action was quick though the enemy showed
indifference.

But, seeing his driver dead, Rāvaṇa's son in battle
Grew anxious and gave up his hauteur.

Thus finding Indrajit with care-worn looks
The monkeys all rejoiced round Lakṣmaṇa great.
(*Rāmāyaṇa : Yuddhakāṇḍa : Canto 90*)

THE WIDOW'S WAIL

Controlling once your senses all, you conquered the
three worlds.

Biding their time the same senses have wreaked their
vengeance upon you.

"Do not court Rāghava's hostility" was my admoni-
tion to you.

Advice you heeded not and this is the outcome of it.

By accident alone you fell in love with Sītā, you great
one among the Rākṣasas !

Only for destruction of your fortunes, your own body
and your kinsmen, you courted her.

Beloved of her lord even as earth of earths and fortune
of fortunes,

Is Sītā of faultless limbs, whom while alone in the forest

You brought here by cunning device, O sinful one !

But unfulfilled has been that lust of yours for Maithilī.

Abandoned I am by love and luxuries by your death; O
hero mine !

Tho' the same, I am much changed ; cursed be the
changing fortunes of kings !

Ha King ! your brows were fine, your skin was soft and
your nose lifted.

By your glow, beauty and lustre once you equalled the
moon, the lotus and the sun.

Garlands of attractive variety and a pleasing smile were
yours once ;

That same face of yours is not attractive today.

Alas, my concluding days have engulfed me in widow-
hood !

But my short-sightedness never made me aware of these
bad turns.

" My father a ruler of demons, My husband a mighty
king of the Rākṣasās,
My son a conqueror of Indra" : Thus was I feeling
proud.

" Heroes they are who have quelled their haughty foes,
who have shown to the world the prowess of their
arms,

Who have no fear from any quarter" : Thus was I
feeling secure.

O King, the saying in your case has proved most true,
That the tears of chaste women may never fall in vain
to the ground....

Why do you lie down ? Rise, oh rise, when disgrace
encircles you !

Today even the Sun's rays enter the city of Laṅkā with
no hesitation.

Oh ! cursed be this heart of mine that does not break
into pieces,

Even when crushed by sorrow at the sight of your body
lying lifeless.

(*Rāmāyaṇa* : *Yuddhakāṇḍa* : Canto 114)

SEASONS

Summer was ended by monsoon's boon to all
And rains did pour while the brothers dwelt in peace.

Skies were overcast and thunder's rumblings heard,
Day and night and at all hours as well, the rains poured
and poured.

With monsoon's burst, clouds in numbers numberless
Hid the sun from sight, tho' lightnings played on them.

The grass grew thick all round, insects and reptiles bred
in numbers,
The earth became wet while dust was all removed.

With water, water everywhere no other object met the
eye ;
Hills and dales, mountains and rivers, were all merged
in the heavy rains.

Gushing torrents with terrific sounds moved fast with
whizzing sighs,
And these wild streams enriched the forest scene.

Forest boars and beasts of prey yelped in groups around,
Their varied cries increased in strength as the beating
rains poured down.

While peacock chicks with their cuckoo friends filled all
the place with sounds,
Frogs kept time with their different notes from all the
corners round.

Thus clouds of varied kinds and sounds came fast and
went away
While autumn robed in her beneficent glow seemed
already come to stay.

Krauñcās flocked about heralding autumn's near
approach,
Thickets and trees all overgrown and rivers full to the
brim,

Autumnal skies their bright stars revealed
To the Pāṇḍava brothers living with the season's crowd
of birds and beasts.

(*Mahābhārata* : *Āraṇya Parva* : Canto 153)

HOME-COMING

Without receiving rich gifts from his friend, Lord
Kṛṣṇa, nor seeking them himself, he (Kuchela)
returned home somewhat hesitant at the thought
of his wife, though jubilant at heart for having
secured Kṛṣṇa's unbounded grace.

"Ah! What magnanimity and kindness showered on
me by Him, 'whom the Brahmins adore! He

embraced me, the lowliest of the low, bearing, as he does, Lakṣmi herself near his heart.

“ He made me sit on the same couch, where his dearest Queen sat beside him, as if I were born of his own mother, while the Queen fanned me so tired, with the white *Cauri* in her hand.

“ The Lord perhaps must have thought thus: ‘ If this fellow so poor were to come upon riches suddenly, he might not remember me in the intoxication of new wealth,’ and therefore it is that he parted with no gifts to me out of the bounty of his great heart.”

So satisfying himself, he entered his poor hut and saw there plenty about him. He wondered how he had become so rich for no reason whatever....

“ The Lord, though owning all good things, parts with everything for his devotees without any fuss, even as the cloud that rains well without proclaiming its arrival by any peal of thunder.

“ However great His own act of kindness, He deems it insignificant indeed; but if His favourite or devotee offers Him a little even, He makes it look considerable before others.

“ For, did He not, the great One, eat with delight the offering of my handful of fried rice? ”

(*Bhāgavatam* : *Skandam* 10 : *Adhyāya* 81)

POETICS

If *Śāstra*, *Itihāsa* and popular culture, all three combine in one piece, it is described as a *Kāvya* or poem.

Words attain prominence in *Śāstra*, meaning in *Itihāsa* and suggestion in poetry.

To be born a human being is a blessing indeed ; to have learning is still more a gain ; to be poetic of mind is much greater as an acquisition ; but to be endowed with vision is perhaps the greatest achievement that could be wished for.

Erudition is rare ; rarer still are discernment and judgment. These will not be within reach of those who have not equipped themselves with knowledge of the *Śāstras*.

(*Agnipurāṇa* : *Adhyāya* 337)

GAYATRI

How did Brahma, the Creator, make this beautiful woman without having a model before him ? If such originality was his, surely He has achieved everything worth aspiring for in art.

Her locks though utterly dark and wanting in straightness only add to her beauty ; defects too, perhaps, when associated with handsome looks can lose their unattractiveness.

Her eyes adorned her ears and her ears adorned her eyes ; there was no need therefore for ornaments for the one or collyrium paint for the other.

(*Padma Purāṇa* : *Adhyāya* 16)

THE SPRING SEASON

As Spring approached, the Palāśa trees aflame with

their crimson blooms that left no leaf visible made the entire place look bright and laughing.

The Nīpa trees possessing on their top branches a profusion of flowers, struck one as servants of a royal household standing loaded with gifts in recognition of their services....

The Vetas plants with finger-shaped flowers seemed to point them as if in denial of their equals' existing anywhere on earth.

(*Vāmanaṣurāṇa* : *Adhyāya* 5)

THE GLORY OF DANCING

Compounded of differing moods
And reflecting emotional situations,
Thus conforming to Life's history
Is the Dance divined by me.

That which is natural for the world
So full of joys and sorrows,
When expressed with bodily movements
Becomes known as the art of Dancing.

(*Bharata* : *Nāṭya Śāstra* : Chapter 1)

WISDOM

Realizing the inevitability of old age and death I have become a follower of the path of renunciation for the sake of Liberation.

I have left behind me my friends and relatives, though I abandoned much earlier my desires, knowing full well they will only lead to unhappiness.

I do not shun poisonous snakes or the bolt from the blue or the fire that is fanned to a conflagration by the wind so much as I do the comforts of this world.

Man stops not with his satisfaction obtained from fulfilment of his desires but tries to rule the regions beyond the waters ;

Even as the sea that shows no contentment with its own mighty expanse of waters, but would take in' more from the rivers that flow into it.

Desires can only lead one to sorrow and destruction like the music of the hunters' song weaning away the innocent deer to their fate or the lamp-glare attracting the beetles to fall and perish in the flame or the piece of flesh on the hook of the fishing-rod baiting the fishes in the water to be caught.

I long for that end as the highest where neither age nor fear nor birth nor death nor sorrows nor actions can prevail.

(*Āśvaghosa: Buddha Caritam: Canto II*)

RENUNCIATION

He crossed the waters of the river on his pensive horse as though he was learning to swim likewise across the vast sea of *Samsāra* (Worldly life).

He donned the ascetic's robes which sufficiently signified by their long associations a life of renunciation, and thereafter started doing penance.

The East beamed her joy in a white glow on gazing

at him, the Lord of the Universe, thus tending towards his great mission in life.

The dawn, seeing the world's conqueror in orange robes, began to clothe herself in the same colour as at his word of bidding.

The Sun, himself having originated the kingly line of which he (Buddha) was a descendant, ascended the eastern hill-top in order to have his fill of gaze at his own progeny, the jewel of the Sākya clan.

The Sun clove the darkness with his rays, showing thereby to him the way to liberate in a similar manner, mankind enshrouded in ignorance.

The tanks full of lily buds seemed as if doing obeisance with folded palms to him who had realized life's purpose.

(*Buddha Ghosācārya : Padyacūḍāmaṇi : Canto 9*)

BEREAVEMENT

Seated on her husband's lap and with colour suddenly changed, she drew him down as she fell herself,
Even as does an oil-drop reach the ground bearing along the spark of the lighted wick.

As life sped from her body she looked like a Viṇā with all its wires disturbed ;
But he with his love transgressing all bounds lifted her tenderly onto his lap.

Bearing on his lap her form so wan and pale,

He looked the moon at dawn with its feeble beam of light.

He wailed aloud in his shaken voice, his courage all abandoned.

Even steel melts in fire; what wonder then if man breaks down in sorrow!

"Alas, if life should be stilled by the touch of soft blooms,

What cannot prove a stronger weapon for Fate to inflict his blows!

"Or, is it an instance of Death inflicting only soft strokes on softer creatures?

For, the example of the lotus being blighted by soft dews is already known.

"My courage fled, my desires quenched, my song finished, my seasons ended,

My adornments to no purpose, my bed forlorn I feel today.

"You were my spouse, my counsellor, my companion, my dear disciple in learning arts,

Cruel Death snatching you away has rendered me utterly devoid of all."

(Kālidāsa : *Raghuvamśa* : Canto 8)

APPARITION OF BEAUTY

As if poking the dying embers of Love's hope with her form,

The mountain-born maiden came upon the scene with her companions.

With Aśoka petals which surpassed the ruby's red,
 With Karṇikāra blooms outwitting the hue of gold,
 With Sindhūvaras strung together like a necklace of
 pearls,
 She came adorned with Spring's festive wreaths.

Bending a little with the weight of her breasts,
 Robed in a garment like morning's glow,
 She seemed herself a wandering creeper swaying and
 bending with its clusters of flowers.

As the bee began to hover round her nether lip with its
 thirst increased at the scent of her breath,
 Her eyes grew agitated and she brushed it aside with
 the lotus bloom in her palm.

Beholding her of faultless limbs putting even *Rati* to
 shame,

The bowman with his flowery darts breathed fresh hope
 of aiming at the God armed with His trident weapon
 and all His senses under control.

(Kālidāsa : *Kumārasambhava* : Canto 3)

THE CLOUD'S JOURNEY

Proceeding northwards your course will have to detour
 somewhat,

For you should not turn away your friendly gaze from
 the central courtyards of mansions in Ujjain,

Where, in case with the timorous glances of women of
 the city frightened at your lightnings' flash

You should not sport, then you will be deceived indeed
 tho' blessed with sight.

Arriving at Avantī resounding with the chronicles of
Udayana from the mouths of old villagers,

Reach then the city of Viśāla expanding with prosper-
 ity as previously mentioned,

Which looks as if, with the exhaustion of the fruits of
 good deeds of those descending from heaven,

A portion of that radiant heaven should have fallen on
 earth like the balance of their unspent joys.

Regaining strength from the odorous fumes emanating
 from windows of mansions where women use them
 to perfume their tresses,

Entertained as well by the peacocks on the house tops
 with their dances,

Refresh thy journey-fatigued self, on those balconies
 smelling with pollen of flowers,

And bearing the marks of dye from the graceful feet of
 women treading upon them.

(Kālidāsa : *Meghasandēśa* : Canto 1)

POETRY

Wealth accumulates in proportion to one's coveting,
 power according to one's youth and ambition.

In the same way does poetic merit get enhanced when
 word and form are joined in due proportion.

(Pravanoasena : *Setubhandham* : Canto 1)

ANGUISH

The wasted form still more emaciated, the eyes, though
 wiped of tears, still looking tearful,

Rāma's hope too already slender got feebler with Hanumān's delay in returning.

Then he espied the son of the wind-God (Māruti) looking light of heart with his mission accomplished, like fulfilled desire taking form and shape.

Through his eyes expanding, Māruti first conveyed good news.

Only later on his words completed the account of his enterprise.

The news " Sītā was seen " was hardly believed ; the description " She is grown wan and pale " met with tear-choked breaths from Rāma ;

The message " She sorrows for you " was received with tears ; the assurance " She lives because you live " made Rāma clasp Māruti by the hand.

Then delivered Hanumān the gem worn by Sītā on her head, which looked lack-lustre in bereavement, neither moving from its place nor shining with its usual brightness on account of its long uncared-for condition.

(Pravanasena : *Setubhandham* : Canto I)

THE GODDESS PARVATI

The ineffable sweetness of your words seems the voice of a parrot caged in your throat,

And so the God of Love has placed the bimba fruit as your nether lip just to tempt that bird from within.

(Mūka : *Pañcaśatī* : *Āryā Śatakam*)

We are not persons attracted by wealth; we are not born
to serve the callous-minded; we are not consumed
by avarice of any kind;

We are not afraid of the world's legacy of pain ;
But we will always enshrine the Goddess Kāmākṣī in
our hearts,

Who loves to dwell in *Kāñcī* and who is the consort of
Him who burnt Love to ashes.

(*Mūka : Stuti Śataka*)

With dark tresses, with bewitchingly long eyes, with
flowery arrows and with love overflowing all bounds,
Is that source of all Love seated on the lap of Hara to be
entertained in the sanctuary of my inmost thoughts.

(*Durvāsa : Lalitāstavaratnam*)

Even like a flame in hand shown to the Lord of daylight
in worship ;

Even like the liquid flowing from the moon-stone poured
out to wash the feet of the moon,

Even like the water in the sea offered to quench its very
thirst,

Is this attempt of mine to praise the Goddess of Speech
with words that are Her own gracious gifts to me.

(*Śaṅkara : Saundarya Laharī*)

ANGER

Indrajit became indignant and spoke thus to his
uncle (*Vibhīṣaṇa*) : “ You were born of our house ;
you grew up strong with flesh and wine at our cost ;
you still breathe in this place, and yet you try to per-
petrate all your crimes on us.

" You are not conscious of your face still flushed with feasting amidst us ; you never care for our kinship, O sinful one ! You do not fear unrighteousness ; you are not afraid of the world's censure even.

" O despiser of Dharma ! You have evidently neither heard of nor realized that in giving up one's own dear ones one can never gain in moral strength."

(Bhaṭṭi Kāvya : *Rāvaṇa Vadha* : Canto 17)

ADMIRATION

My eldest brother, so virtuous, has borne all our adversities with great mental equanimity ; it is easier, indeed, to score a victory in battle than to win golden opinions of the eminent and the wise among men.

The minds of the great do not lose clarity, however violently tossed ; the waters of the sea never become turbid though agitated severely by storms.

(Bhāravi : *Kirātārjunīyam* : Canto 11)

POETIC EXCELLENCE

Natural genius, good erudition, clarity in thinking,
And sustained effort go to enrich poetic excellence.

Devoid one may be of inborn talents and of essential
imagination too ;

But constant application and education of the mind can
contribute some merit to his writing.

If seekers of fame propitiate the Muse with unabating
zeal,

Though poor the results, the experience gathered will
sustain them in an assembly of the learned.

(Daṇḍin : *Kāvyaḍarśa* : Chapter 1)

ADVICE

The great ones are forgiving to their enemies who seek
their mercy ;

The mighty rivers take unto themselves the waters of
tributaries in their passage to the ocean, their lord.

He who is uncautious at the approach of the enemy
raging with hatred resembles an unwary person
who tries to sleep in the direction of the wind fan-
ning the flames of the hay-ricks set on fire by himself.

(Maghā : *Śiśupālavadha* : Canto 2)

GODDESS CANDI

May the bountiful Bhavānī easily absolve you of your
sins !

When all the eleven Rudras take to flight in fear ;

When the Sun on high begins to flicker like a flame ;

When the god of thunder becomes impotent of his
instrument ;

When the moon swoons away in sheer fright ;

When the winds cease blowing ;

When Kubera (Lord of Wealth) no longer fights his
enemies ;

When the Master of Vaikuṇṭha Himself has lost the
efficacy of his powers,

Then She alone can conquer the Demon of Maḥiṣa
however strong he may prove in his fury.

(Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa : *Caṇḍi Śatakam* : Verse 66)

LITERARY DISCUSSION

Qualities become worthy of their possessor when duly appreciated by the cultured ;

The lotus flowers justify their name only when blessed by the rays of the Sun.

The night by moonbeams, the pool by lotuses, the creeper by its fresh sprouts,

The autumnal season by swans, and the enjoyment of poetry by sympathetic criticism get enriched.

(Ananda Vardhana : *Viṣamabāṇa Līla*)

THE STRONG MAN

The strong person combines in himself the ability to confer favour upon as well as to control the spirit in others ; the Sun can transmit light to the moon to wax in the lunar half of the month just as he alone can deprive it of its brightness at dawn.

(Ratnākara : *Haraviṣaya* : Canto 8)

SELF-APPRECIATION

This book of mine will not die even though works of great writers may exist by its side ;

For the burning lamp will not fail of its light within the walls because of the moonlight in the open outside.

(Trivikrama Kavi : *Kuvalayāsava Vilāsa Campū* : Chapter 1)

APPRECIATION

One has no need to be a poet himself in order to be a good critic of poetry ; for one can enjoy a fine repast without possessing ability to prepare it himself.

Poetry like woman enhances in value and prestige by being espoused adequately by true connoisseurs.

When devoid of talent or judgment one tries to follow others' opinions. It will be sounding doom to poetry if it has to be appreciated by one possessing neither gifts nor capacity to judge.

(Somadeva Sūri : *Yāśastilaka Campū* : *Āsvāsam* 1.)

LOVE-SMITTEN

From the time she glanced at you, her sighs have been getting longer even as are the days in summer,
Her body slowly emaciating in anguish just as the nights are dwindling during the summer season.

Like the female swan pining on the waters of the lake,
like the female deer gasping for breath in the orchard,

Like the Cakravāka bird moaning on the sand-dune,
she remains in sorrow and turns from side to side in her bed.

You occupy her mind all the time;
Your name dwells often on her lips;
Your looks have compelled her gaze to be so rivetted on them as not to be diverted anywhere else;
O Comrade! She has irretrievably fallen into this state.

Her lips quiver as if in eagerness to communicate something;
But words fail her as if something were controlling her from within.

(Abhinanda : *Kādambarī Kathā Sāram* : Canto 6)

SEPARATION

When the descendant of Kakutstha dwelt on the slopes
of Mālyavān during his separation from his beloved,
The rainy weather which increased his tears with its
unceasing downpour passed away.

The clouds stopped raining on the mountain's lap ;
But Rāma's tears showed no ceasing.
The sky shone bright with moonlight and the lake extended
laughing with lotuses ;
But the tear-stained faces of the two brothers grew wan
and weary with anguish.

The Ketaka plant sent out its sprouts in the wet
ground ;
But there was hardly any indication of Sugrīva's gratitude
assuming any material shape.

The breeze carrying pollen from Mālātī creepers wafted
the fragrance on Rāma's body.
But Māruti did not bring yet any message from Sītā to
her eager Rāma.

The earth underneath showed signs of breaking with
the slushy sod drying up
As if unable to bear the sight of Rāma's inconsolable
grief.

(Abhinanda : *Rāmacarita*)

RETALIATION

(Lakṣhmaṇa to Sītā) :
Sumitrā, who gave me birth, is truly my mother, Oh
beautiful one,

Though your tenderness and care have left no want of
motherly affection for me ;

But alas ! by strange misfortune your harsh words
Have turned you in this forest wild into the other
mother betwixt the elderly two at home.

(Bhoja : *Rāmāyaṇa Campū : Āraṇyakāṇḍa*)

SONG IN PRAISE OF THE LORD

Oh thou flute, who hast tasted of the sweetness of the
nectar of breath from the lotus-faced Mukunda,
I bow to thee and beg of thee, as thou approachest the
nether lip of the son of Nanda, to breathe in his
ear my humble petition.

" Mother ! "

" What, child ? "

" Give me the milk-pan ! "

" What for ? "

" To keep the milk in. "

" Not now. "

" Then when will you give me ? "

" Only at night. "

" What is night ? "

" When darkness shrouds sky and earth. "

At this, closing both his eyes, Kṛṣṇa cried : " Give me
now, mother ; night has come ! " May He, that
child-god, pulling at his mother's upper garment
again and yet again, save us from all troubles !

(*Līlāśuka : Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta : Śataka 2*)

BEGGING AND CHARITY

Even though one might ultimately part with some-
thing by way of charity, the sins accumulated by ini-

tial attempts at warding off beggars through cleverness, railery and contempt as well as heaping humiliations on them cannot be easily wiped away.

The earth does not heave under the weight of trees, mountains and seas as under the tread of persons who have not charity in their hearts to give alms to beggars.

(Sri Harṣa : *Naiṣadhīyam* : Canto 5)

REBUKE

At the time of my wedding, my father, being ignorant of the real state of affairs, imagined much by way of happiness for me.

For he could not anticipate my beloved husband would forsake me even as he did his own good reputation.

A woman separated from her lord will be like riches unspent in acts of charity or like speech devoid of sincerity or like learning uninspired by culture.

(Kṣemendra : *Rāmāyaṇa Mañjarī* : *Ayodhya Kāṇḍa*)

REFLECTIONS UPON OLD AGE

He became stricken with anxiety one day on seeing in the mirror his own face overgrown with white hairs which resembled the lotus bloom covered with flakes of snow.

Old age withers good looks even as the moonlight blights the lotus flower.

For the sign of age appears as a gleam of light from the whitish fangs of ferocious Death or the spray of angry laughter of inevitable Time itself.

It is easier to restrain one's amusement at the sight of a camel making efforts at graceful movement or at an ass trying to bray in sweet tones than at an old man diverting himself in amorous sports.

(Kṣemendra : *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* : *Adhyāya* 14)

THE COURTESAN

She [a courtesan] is impossible of conquest by either intellect or devotion or position or diplomacy or virtue. Just as doing service to the undeserving, fidelity to a courtesan will lead one to humiliation in the end.

Like death which is a recogniser of no differences, she bears no attachment to children nor gets attracted to youth permanently nor appears reverent to old age.

The courtesan can cut at the very roots of her adorer's heart like the sharp edge of an axe, quite as much as she can prove herself to be as sweet as honey in her speech and unrelenting as like shining steel in her heart.

(Kṣemendra : *Deśopadeśa* : Discourse 3)

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW

In Hastināpura there lived a Brahmin called Śivadatta. To this wealthy man was I born with the name of Vasudatta. While young, I was initiated into all the Vedic lore and all the Śāstra Vidyās. Seeing me grown-up, my father decided upon marriage for me with a girl belonging to an equally good family as ours. My

mother was a woman of very irascible and cruel disposition and hardly appeasable in her anger. So she could not tolerate the idea of my being in my wife's company. My father left the house suddenly for some unknown destination. I became nervously anxious to please my mother, because of her condition. In this I sought the assistance of my newly wedded wife, who was equally timid by temperament. But my mother was determined not to be pleased with all these, and began to indulge in all sorts of domestic quarrels with my young wife. Being wicked by nature, she alternated between moods of peevish indifference and imaginary grievances and complaints. How can fire help its intrinsic quality of burning ! Hence, soon after, being unable to put up with the bad treatment of her mother-in-law, my wife left the house for where I know not. Alas for me, who wanted to leave the house, my relatives gathered together and forced on me a second marriage with another girl. My second wife also shared the same fate at my mother's hands. So she helped herself to quit the world by committing suicide by hanging herself. Crushed under the sorrow I tried to fly away from my home. Again my people tried to persuade me, even though I protested my inability to live with my mother. They pressed on me considerations such as my father's long absence and other reasons for not leaving the house.

Thereupon, without their knowledge, I contrived a clever device by which I caused an image of a girl to be made of wood. I got the report circulated that I had married again and that my wife was shy and confined to her room. I locked the room where I left the image. A servant-maid was engaged by me as if to wait

upon my wife and be of service to the new-comer. I did not allow my wife to be seen by my mother. I told my mother thus : " You two shall hereafter keep to your respective apartments within the house. You need not go to see my wife nor she to you. She is not trained in household duties and hence her absence will not matter to you." My mother believed me. Many days passed thus without my mother ever getting a glimpse of my supposed wife who was always hidden from her sight.

Once my mother hitting her head with a stone and smearing her body all over with blood wailed aloud from the central courtyard of my house. On hearing her loud wail I rushed inside with some neighbours to see what it was. My mother cried with great agitation to my question, " What is the matter ? " thus : " This is all done to me by my new daughter-in-law without the slightest provocation from me. My refuge lies only in death ; for I can no longer stand this." Hearing this my relatives became indignant and entered with me into the room where my supposed wife was detained. On removing the latch and pushing the doors in, we beheld there only a wooden image of a woman. They all then laughed at my ingenious device and at my mother's self-humiliation. They left for their homes thereafter. I also left my home in disgust, and roaming with no aim accidentally entered this gambling hall.

(Somadeva Bhaṭṭa : *Kathā Saritsāgaram* : *Taraṅgam* 7)

REFLECTION ON LIFE

To the man of mere words, a real fight is the finish ;
To a family's glory, an unworthy son is the sure sign of

extinction ;

To cordiality among kith and kin, argument and analysis of motives is the breaking point ;

To studies, enjoyment is a foe ;

To the shallow-minded and gossipy, an assembly of learned men is a regular scare ;

To disciplined action, indulgence of all kinds is wrongful ;

O friend ! To a courtesan's amours, the depletion of one's coffers is the most natural end.

(Jalhaṇa : *Mugdhopadeśa* : Verse 12)

A CAMPAIGN

Lalitāditya proved himself the Sun of Pralaya (the great deluge) in drying up the waters of fame which flowed like a grand river from the mountain of Yaśovarman.

Poets like Vākpatirāja and Bhavabhūti who had adorned the court of Yaśovarman were taken as hostages, along with the captive King, to his kingdom where they were made to sing his own praises.

The army of Lalitāditya after encircling Yaśovarman like the Ganges round a Himalayan peak, coursed down towards the Eastern seas.

As the mighty elephants in his army began to wave their huge trunks over the billows, the sea seemed being actually raised high by its myriad tufts.

(Kalhaṇa : *Rājataranginī* : Chapter 4)

MY SWEETHEART

[When taken to the scaffold for having made love to the King's daughter the poet burst into song thus :—]

Even now let my mind fondly trace my sweetheart's face, which is white and rosy as the inside of a full-blown lotus, with the mark of sweet-scented *Gorocana* on her forehead and her eyes rolling slightly with love's wine.

Even now I do not forget her beautiful teeth resembling the Kunda buds and her mischievous glances stealing their way from the edges of her eyes. Can I help remembering her beautiful face? Can gratitude help remembering good deeds done?

Even now I remember her turning from me on her side in bed, in spite of my attempt to please her; I remember her pretensions to be asleep while awake, but not for long; for in the morning her hand would be lying on my body.

Even now I feel her concealed like a bee in the petals of my heart. May Fate mercifully decree that in my next birth at least I shall be happy with her and never be separated from the fawn-eyed one who is increasingly charming in her love.

(Bilhaṇa : *Caura Pañcāśikā*)

APPRAISEMENT

If the mind yearns for Hari,
If it can enjoy the sweetness
of expression,

Listen ye, then, to Jayadeva's lines
 Brimming with words soaked in
 dulcet sounds, soft
 and symphonious.

(Jayadeva : *Gita Govinda* : Canto 1)

MORNING

The elephants of war woke up as if from a dream of the approaching battle by turning on their sides and lifting their trunks as if to snatch the rising sun, imagining it to be the whitish disc of the foe's umbrella.

[*Note* :—In battles, to proclaim victory elephants used to be goaded on to seize the enemy's umbrella with their trunks as indicative of the seizure of overlordship from the enemy.]

(Dhanañjaya : *Dvīsandhāna* : Canto 17)

MUKTAKAS (Pearls)

Pārvatī's future happiness was assured to her companions even at the moment of her hand being taken in that of Śiva; because the God carefully moved his serpent wristlet so high as not to cause her fear.

Oh Kṛṣṇa! With your breath you have removed from Rādhikā's face the dust particles even as you have simultaneously removed from the hearts of your other sweethearts the respect they cherished for you till now.

Aunt! With my thirsty eyes I looked at him but could not quench the thirst in the least like one trying to slake her thirst in a dream.

The ruby colour of her lips was kissed away by her man in the night ; but lo ! the morning found the same colour in the irises of his other women.

I have to dance to my lover's tunes which are ever changing. Do we not notice every day the creeper entwining itself round and round the tree though the tree remains unmoving from its place ?

Seeking you in vain in the crowd of handsome young men, her eyes rolled in distraction as if lost in a wilderness with no human beings anywhere.

The girl selling flower-garlands has culled many an eager heart while her gently moving fingers were displaying to them her basketful of flowers.

Why do you ask her smilingly the reason for her emaciation, imagining yourself to be the cause ? For her answer is " It is my natural condition during the hot weather."

(*Sātavahana : Gāthā Saptaśatī*)

EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL IN ITS PLACE

Just as at early break of day the sun shines like a crowning gem on the hill-top, just as with the day's advance he floats like a golden lotus on the surface of the blue sky, just as at eventide he appears like a vermilion dot upon the brow of the Goddess of Beauty, so does everything in its natural setting appear proper and inviting.

(*Abhaya Deva : Jayanta Vijayam : Canto 18*)

LOVELORN

Like a streak of moonlight pure fallen on the floor of a
 dog-killer's hovel,
 Like a lopped-off branch of the Pārijāta-tree dragged
 into a wilderness of poisonous plants,
 Like a soulful strain of a poet getting discussed among
 pseudo-versifiers,
 Will be my Sītā found, forlorn and fatigued, in the
 Rākṣasa's palace.

Like a lotus pool distracted by the driving rains, like
 meaning lost in a haze of words,
 Like a lotus stalk stuck in mire, like a she elephant
 devoid of her mate,
 Like a digit of the moon hidden by clouds, like desire
 despoiled by disappointment,
 Like a female-deer pounced upon by a tiger, like a bow-
 string lying on the ground will be my Sītā.
 (Vedānta Deśika : *Hamsa Sandeśa* : Chapter 2)

THE HORSE

Emerging from his palace the King saw
 A thoroughbred animal drawn up before the front of
 his residence.
 Equal to the king of birds, equal to the mind in quick-
 ness,
 Equal to the wind, he looked a compendium of all
 speed.
 As if feeling earth insufficient for the full scope of his
 own speed,

He hit the earth with his hoofs as if beating it into
greater length.

Recalling Indra's own steed by his fleetness
He seemed overtaking his own reflection fallen on the
ground set with precious stones.

With foam in mouth he looked like laughing outright
At Hanumān's pride in crossing only a single sea of salt.

With mouth-bit designed in serpent shape and capar-
isoned with wing-like ornaments,
He imitated Garuḍa in physical appearance as well.
(Gaṅga Devi : *Mathura Vijayam* : Canto 4)

AGASTYA

Indra's descendant (Arjuna) proceeded towards the
south, the seat of Agastya,
Whose command turned the mountain (Vindhya) into
a babe on the lap of the earth,
Whose stomach contained and digested Vātāpi like the
fire an oblation thrown in it,
And whose angry spark dried up the very waters of the
oceans.

(Ananta Bhaṭṭa : *Bhārata Campū* : *Stabhaka* 3 :
Verse 20)

THE MASTER-BEGGAR

Why does He with the banner of the bull, carry the
begging-bowl in His hands for alms?
Perhaps, others imitate the affluent and prosperous,
while He does the lowly and the poor.

The milky ocean produced nectar for the Devas: but
gave the poison of poisons to the Master of kings;
Thus the silly world tries to propitiate the materially
fortunate and neglect the spiritually rich.

(Utprekṣā Vallabha : *Bhikṣāṭaṇa Kāvyaṃ* :
Paddhati 19)

REALISATION

The realised self may feel no wonder at life's illusion,
Even should the Sun's rays turn cool or the Moon's
beams burn hot or the flame of Fire leap down-
wards.

The detached soul senses no pleasure
Nor loathes anything as bad.
It always feels like having the cool comfort of sandal
paste
When its entire being is saturated with ecstatic joy.
(Sadāśivendra Sarasvatī : *Ātma Vidyā Vilāsam*)

NATURE

The petals of white flowers covering the black bees that
had entered the hearts of the flowers for sucking
honey-drops, presented the impression of *Satva*
quality in abundance easily repressing both *Rajas*
and *Tamas* in man.

The trees dripping with honey from the blooms anoint-
ed the earth, one of the manifestations of the God
Śivā's eight forms; the bees humming as they
hovered about seemed to produce *Sāman* music, so
sweet to His ear.

(Nilakanṭha Dīkṣita : *Śiva Lilārṇava* : Canto 2)

WAR NEWS

Accounts of the battle from unauthenticated sources, began to assume fresh shape and colour every time and on everybody's lips thus: "The enemies are besieging the city ramparts; they have overcome the first defence and are rushing inside; some have already reached the city precincts; the battle is terrible and Indra has become already a captive of the Asuras."

(Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita : *Nīlakaṇṭha Vijaya Campū* :
Chapter 1)

THE PROWESS OF THE GOD OF WIND

What a surprise that even the Wind-God whom even ordinary Brahmins keep within them by their breath-controlling practice, whom the creeping creatures and crawling reptiles mainly devour for their food and whom mere worn-out winnows can bring back to life, has gained such untold violence !

(Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita : *Nīlakaṇṭha Vijaya Campū* :
Chapter 1)

SPARKS FROM THE ANVIL

To the maternal uncle the mother is a source of strength ;

To the son-in-law the daughter forms the chief support ;

To the father-in-law every little help comes from the mother-in-law ;

To guests that arrive the host alone can prove helpful.

The debtor fears the creditor though he has no awe-inspiring fangs in his mouth or any strangling noose in his hands. (Attributes of the God Yama)

He is extolled by people deserving of praise at his hands; he is served by people who are worthy of service at his hands; the rich are neither afraid nor ashamed of such consequences.

(Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita : *Kalivīḍambana*)

The brave are appreciated everywhere;
the coward meets with death everywhere;
Goats generally are killed for food;
but when sent out for fight they are decorated.

With domestic felicity assured, one can attain both heaven and Liberation; but without it nothing can be reached.

(Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita : *Sabhārāṇjana Śatakam*)

THE FINAL JOURNEY

The path is long and trodden by one and all though none makes adequate preparation or even thinks of them.

For none can obtain there, for money even, either shelter or water or clothing or food or vehicle or light.

(Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita : *Śānti Vilāsam*)

MAN'S DESTINY

If anyone endowed with keen perceptions and an iron will uses them for self-destruction instead of for removal of obstructions in the way of his own progress, how can God be blamed for it?

(Venkaṭādhvarin : *Viśvaḡuṇādarśa Campū*)

THE CAUVERI

The rows of tall trees on both banks of the river appear with their tuft-like foliage, like men ranged on the banks to swim across the waters with their loin-cloths tied round their heads in the act of preparation for swimming.

(Venkaṭādhvarin : *Viśvagunādarśa Campū*)

THE CHOLA COUNTRY

The cocoanut palms bearing their heavy clusters of fruits on the tops look like men carrying *Pūrṇa-kumbhas* for welcoming the heart-dweller in the sun.

[*Note* :—*Pūrṇa-kumbha* is a utensil containing water purified by sacred *mantrās*, prepared whenever a guest of merit has to be welcomed with due honours.]

(Venkaṭādhvarin : *Viśvagunādarśa Campū*)

GEMS

A mighty mind, surrounded though by troubles,
Surprises the world by unprecedented magnanimity;
The black *agaru* (eagle-wood) though encircled by
tongues of fire,
Spreads only odour of the finest kind all round.

Though born of high parentage and though well equipped,
one cannot look distinguished unless in chosen company;

For does not the *Viṇā* look poor when bereft of the
pitcher-shaped gourd on which it should rest?

(Paṇḍita Rāja Jagannātha : *Rasa Gaṅgādhara*)

LOVE'S WAYS

The beauty of Jānakī's lotus eyes evinced confusion under drooping eyelids, but on beholding Rama's budding youth, his handsome looks, his demeanour and strength, their petals unfolded instinctively.

"Night has arrived to dispel the brooding drowsiness of my mind; how can I long nurse this sensitiveness of my heart?"; thus cogitated the lotus-eyed one with alternating fears and hopes; ere long came upon her the bright-looking moon bearing the message of love to her from the King of her heart.

(Paṇḍita Rāja Jagannātha : *Bhāminī Vilāsa*)

BEMOANING A SWEETHEART

After gratifying me in ever so many ways with your love's promptings, which have played with me awhile and have vanished like quick lightning strokes, you have gone away leaving me in utter distress, even as prosperity forsakes a monarch when wise counsels leave him untouched.

She inspirited and soothed my entire being like cooling camphor paste for the eyes or like a garland of full blown lotuses round the neck or like true poetry providing inspiration to the soul.

(Paṇḍita Rāja Jagannātha : *Kāmollāsa*)

ODE TO INDIA

That which aids mainly men's realisation of their dreams,

That which is honoured alike by all however differing
in their tastes

Is truth so eagerly sought after in this land by Hariś-
candra, the noblest of Kings,

Whose fame like pollen of flowers was wafted to all the
three worlds.

(*Āryācaritam* : Anthology of Sanskrit Epic Stories :
Edited by V. Krishnaswami Aiyar)

HIGH THINKING

Seers of old with their keen perceptions presenting them
with a vision of the Truth of all existence,

Suffering from no sorrows and cherishing no passions,
But calm and resigned with their dwelling-place in the
mansion of Vedānta built on the top of a hundred
Vedic texts,

Have achieved endless joy unequalled in Self-realisation.

(*Rādhāmaṅgalam Nārāyaṇa Śāstrin : Caturvargāvatāram*)

THE IDEAL COUPLE

By motiveless attentions to him

She drew his heart in love,

And he, the great sage,

Reciprocated with discernment.

By steady and sweet gaze

She became his sweetheart ;

By unfettered speech and flow of love

He became her lord.

In grassy glades sometimes,

In shady groves of forest trees,

On mountain slopes cool with thickets in profusion,

The couple spent their youthful time.

(Kāvyaakaṇṭha Gaṇapati Śāstrin: *Bhārgava Caritam* :

Canto 1)

PROSE AND DRAMA

THE COURTESAN'S MOTHER

These are the aspects on which a courtesan's mother has to concentrate her attention in rearing up her child, namely, to apply perfumed cosmetics to the limbs of the girl even from her childhood; to put her on such nutritious diet as would supply her with enough bodily radiance, strength, complexion and wits as well as help her normal appetite and digestion; to keep even the man who gave her life from visiting her frequently after her fifth year of life; to celebrate her birthdays and other events of her life in adequate style; to initiate her into the arts of love-making with all their accessory aids; to familiarise her with the secrets of the arts of dancing, music, instrumental play, histrionics, painting and the culinary art; to teach her how to prepare sandal paste and flower pigments as well as to gain efficiency in calligraphy and conversational graces; to supply her with that amount of acquaintance of the Śāstras such as grammar, logic and philosophy so as to enable her to carry on discussions without showing want of information; to guide her in the science of living; to teach her knowledge of games and dice-throwing as well as equip her with the necessary zest for watching cock-and bull-fights; to induce her to learn from adept and

experienced gallants the tricks of amorous wooing; to decorate her person attractively on occasions of festival and public carnival and to send her out attended upon by a proper retinue; to make her ingratiate herself in the favour of men of influence and rank in order to succeed in her performances before audiences; to propitiate the virtuosos in the various arts in order to gain a favourable atmosphere for her own excursions into them; to make astrologers and palmists spread her prospective fame from a reading of her chart; to gather from that group who visit dancing girls enough of appreciation for her good looks, qualities, wit and figure; to give her away to anyone blindly in love with her in case he is rich and independent also otherwise; to yield her up to one who has high intellectual attainments though poorly equipped with worldly materials; to persuade her to live with one by Gāndharva wedding but later on to extort money from him and finally, if need be, to resort to courts of law for recovering her money claims.

(Daṇḍin : *Daśakumāracaritam* : Section 2 : Chapter 2)

MAIDEN'S YOUTH

But my father, being childless, felt overjoyed at my birth in a greater measure than if a son had been born to him. Ten days having thus passed after my seeing the light of day, my father, performing everything according to ancient rites, gave me the name of Mahāśvetā (the fair-complexioned one), so very appropriate in my case. In my father's home I began to lisp in sweet tones and passed from lap to lap of the Gandhar-

vas, fondled like a precious lute. My childhood was spent thus without my wanting affection or feeling pain or distress of any kind. Youth gently evinced signs in my limbs like the month of Madhu in a season of spring or the sight of fresh sprouts at the approach of Madhu or the birth of bloom with the appearance of sprouts or the buzz of the bee at the sight of the flower or the madness of wine as the bee enjoys it.

(Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa : *Kādambarī* : Part 1)

LOVE-MESSAGE

I know what strong love is yours. But how dare maidens, as tender and soft as Śirīṣa flowers, assume boldness of any kind, especially when they have not passed their girlhood? It would seem preposterous, if they should send messages of love or should they on their own initiative try to approach their lovers. I am bashful still, being an uninitiated girl. What, therefore, shall I send you? If I should address you as "Dearest" it will sound like dull repetition. If I but ask you whether I am pleasing to you it will bespeak my ignorance. If I but confess that I am growing fonder of you, it will be the enticing language of a courtesan. If I despair that life without you would be non-existent, it may appear unnatural or artificial. If I accuse the God of Love in self-defence, it will be betraying my lower self. If I say that Love has bestowed me upon you, it will look just a device for throwing myself upon your attentions. If I but call you mine by force, it is nothing but the wanton act of a fallen woman. If I expect you to approach me on your own volition, it will

show me up in all my vanity of personal looks. If I should indicate my readiness to join you, I should be deemed utterly devoid of womanly traits. If my words describe me as a slave to your wishes, it will be a crude avowal of my constancy. If I should happen to keep silence for fear of your rejection, then certainly it would be an invitation (sent you) to start courting me. Should I but underrate myself as a source of all your worries, it would be pointing me out as making importunities. If I should conclude that you would know me only after I had breathed my last, it might all sound so impossible.

(Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa : *Kādambarī* : Part I)

THE BATTLE-STAINED VICTOR

He saw his elder brother, whose victory over the enemy was achieved at the cost of severe wounds inflicted by missiles, though the wounds remained bandaged with pieces of white cloth that looked like the whitish glances of the Goddess of kingly prosperity fallen on him; whose brows were bedewed with beads of hot perspiration indicating their eagerness, as it were, to fall down at the feet of his Sire; the price of whose victory was the emaciation of his own body; whose compassion seemed almost to enslave him; whose anguish kept him its bondsman; whose pathetic plight seemed to be disciplining him; whose obsession of mind appeared to engulf him; whose silence rendered him dumb; whose misfortune seemed to have pounded him into a lump; whose sadness roasted him alive; whose bitter lamentations thoroughly weakened him; whose renunciation had him almost in its clutches; whose intellect seemed to

have lost its edge ; and whose grit abandoned him by the concatenation of adverse circumstances.....

(Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa : *Harṣacarita* : Chapter 6)

REPUDIATION

Having made up his mind he (Santanu) said to Gaṅgā thus: " Ah sweet one, no doubt you have gratified me completely ; certainly you are endowed with gifts for love-making ; you are clever indeed in your attentions upon your lord ; you are never wanting in diligence in the matter of decorating yourself ; you are quick of discernment ; you have not stood in the way of my pursuits ; you are worthy of appreciation for perfection in everything about your person, for efficiency in everything you touch and for intellectual alertness in all subjects you pursue. All these deserve congratulations. Still I ask, why this craze in you for infanticide so much despised by all the world ? Has any evil spirit taken hold of your senses ? Otherwise, one is at a loss to explain this cruelty of a mother putting an end to the lives of her own offspring that resemble the very sparks of a flame. None can be easy of heart for granting a boon of this kind. It is now clear why our forefathers restricted women's independence ; for they should have known what harm they could cause if they possessed freedom to do what they liked. Pray, do not stifle this little spark of life that can enkindle the undying flame of a long progeny in me. The liberty you were given by me ceases from now.

(Lakṣmaṇa Sūri : *Bhīṣma Vijayam* : Chapter 1)

THE WILES OF COURTESANS

One can regain life with the aid of antidotes from the
bite of a poisonous snake ;

One can save himself even from the impending danger
of a mad elephant ;

One can avoid even the opened jaws of the shark in the
sea ;

But none can come out safe after having fallen into the
flames of a courtesan's wiles.

(Vararuci (Bhāṣa) : *Ubhayābhisārikā*)

MUSIC

(Enter Cārudatta and his friend, the Jester.)

Cārudatta : Well sung by Rebhilaka ; Vīṇa is indeed a
gem, though no ocean gave it birth.

For, it proves a comforter to the heart in anguish ;

It helps the distracted mind to regain its balance ;

It consoles the heart lacerated by separation in love ;

It increases love when the heart is already prepared for
it.

Jester : Come, come, let us to our homes.

Cārudatta : Well does Rebhilaka sing.

Jester : I only wish to laugh aloud when a woman tries
to speak Sanskrit and a man raises his voice to
produce sweet sounds in music.

Cārudatta : My friend Rebhilaka sang perfectly well,
though you have no appreciation for it : Listen,
The song was vibrant and sweet, of proper tempo, clear
and adequate of Bhāva ; with all that, it was
simple and yet alluring.

Need I say more to praise it ? Will it not suffice ?

If I felt that a woman's voice was there behind it
all ? Further,

The words aligned well with the notes produced ;
the lute strings blended perfectly with the tune of
the song ;

In the *mārcchanās* the voice scaled the higher octave
only to descend gradually in a whispering softness ;
The modulation was excellent and the tune repeated
itself in symphony.

Even after the music has ceased, I seem to hear the
song in my ears as I am walking.

Jester : It is all right ; but even the dogs of the market-
place have gone to sleep. Let us hasten home.

(*Śūdraka : Mṛcchakaṭikam : Act 3*)

VERSIFICATION

Viṭa : (Addressing a poet behind the curtain)

Oh friend Kātyāyana, why dost thou clutch at the
air ? Well, what is it you are saying ? (Repeating
what is heard by him) " The devil of poetry has
possessed me ! " O cobbler doing patch-work
with phrases taken from ancient sources ! Why do
you hunt for words as if you were a cowherd
searching for his straying cattle ? On what theme
have you woven out lines ? (Hearing something)
Well, is this what you say ? " A verse has been
composed by me upon the spring season. " Well,
shall I listen to you then ? Is the verse written
upon the wall for me to read out ?

(Looking at the verse and reading it aloud)

"With the laughter of flowers, with the bees drunk with wine, with the kokil growing garrulous all the time, with perspiration of the body smelling fragrant, with breeze blowing softly, the season holds out maidens in their innocence and gaiety though shy to be courted by lovers; but even a hundred liaisons cannot perform with ease what the season of Spring does for lovers."

(Śūdraka : (Bhāṇa) : *Padma Prābhātakam*)

TRUE LOVE

[Scene where the King and his friend, the Court Jester, meet and talk. Padmāvatī, the newly espoused princess, hears the conversation from behind. Vāsavadattā, the former Queen of the King, reported as dead, is in disguise in Padmāvatī's place and acts as her companion. A maid-servant also attends on them.]

Vidūṣaka : Friend, there is none here in the garden.
Let me crave of you an answer to a question of mine.

King : As you please.

Vidūṣaka : Whom do you love the more of the two
Vāsavadattā, who is no more, or
Padmāvatī, who is alive?

King : Why do you place me in a dilemma?

Padmāvatī : (From her hiding-place) Dear friend!
What a mischievous fellow he is for
causing this perplexing situation for
the King!

Vāsavadattā : (To herself) Indeed, I am equally in a
fix.

- Vidūṣaka : Reveal yourself to me without fear.
 For the one is no longer alive and the
 other nowhere within our hearing.
- King : I cannot, I cannot give it out. You
 are a regular chatterbox.
- Padmāvatī : Why, the King by this vacillation has
 almost said it.
- Vidūṣaka : Upon my honour, I will tell none. See,
 I have already closed my mouth so
 tightly that the teeth have bitten off
 the tip of my tongue.
- King : No, I dare not say it out.
- Padmāvatī : Look at the Court Jester! Still he is
 dense and understands not the King's
 meaning.
- Vidūṣaka : Please do tell me. I swear upon our
 lasting friendship that I shall never
 communicate it to any one else.
- King : Well, you are obstinate and I feel no
 escape. Please listen.
 However worthy of me Padmāvatī may
 be by her beauty, her character and
 her sweet amiability,
 My love for Vāsavadattā remains un-
 shaken and refuses to be lured away
 by her.
- Vāsavadattā : (To herself) I have at last my reward
 for waiting. Indeed, my presence here
 incognito has its own advantages.
- Maid-servant : Madam, the King lacks grace.

Padmāvatī : Why girl, do not say so. The King is gracious enough ; for he cherishes still his old love, Vāsavadattā.

(Bhāsa : *Svapnavāsavadattam* : Act 4)

SERENITY

[Scene: Rāma in the company of Sītā in his palace. He is informed of Daśaratha's unconscious state in Kaikeyī's palace.]

(Enter Chamberlain.)

Chamberlain : Help, Oh help, Prince !

Rāma : Who wants help ?

Chamberlain : The great King, thy sire.

Rāma : What my father ? Well, it is like saying the entire world asks for help. Who is the cause of this sudden mishap ?

Chamberlain : From his nearest the King has received this blow.

Rāma : What ! from his own near and dear ? Alas, then how can there be consolation.

The enemy aims his blow only at the body ; but relatives aim at the heart. Well, Oh ! who can be that whose claim to kinship with me thus makes me so much ashamed ?

Chamberlain : Who else but Queen Kaikeyī herself ?

Rāma : Ah ! Do you mouth Kaikeyī's name ? She cannot labour but for ultimate good, I know.

- Chamberlain: How, Prince?
- Rāma: Listen to me,
What could be there for her to covet for
which she should perpetrate a wrong?
How can she require wants when she
has for a husband one equal to Indra
and for a son one like me?
- Chamberlain: Ah, do not expect the same sense of
fairness in women, who cannot be
trusted. Know, it was she who
prevented your anointment as king.
- Rāma: Am I not then lucky?
- Chamberlain: How could you justify her for demand-
ing Bharata's coronation unasked? Is
it not avaricious?
- Rāma: Your partiality towards me makes you
blind to the good that is concealed
within that prayer.

(Bhāsa : *Pratimā Nāṭakam* : Act I)

THE ENEMY

- If you want to know of Arjuna's prowess, ask of Indra
himself who was rescued from the clutches of an
Asura named Nivāta Kavaca,
- Ask of the God Śiva who in the disguise of a hunter
came to rejoice at Arjuna's feats of strength and
skill of archery and present him with his *Pāśupata*
Astra,
- Ask of the God Agni who consumed the entire jungle of
Khāṇḍava where the numerous serpents were all
destroyed,

And ask finally of Citrāṅgada from whom you were yourself liberated and brought here in safety.

(Bhāsa : *Dūta Ghaṭotkacam* : Act 1)

PAINTING

[King Duṣyanta in a penitent mood after coming to know of his folly in rejecting Śakuntalā.]

(Enter a maiden named Caturikā with a painted canvas in her hand.)

Caturikā: Here is the picture of the Queen.

Jester: (Looking at it) Well done, my dear friend, the picture is exquisite because of your imagination inspiring it.

My eyes seem not to move easily over it as the depressions and elevations in the picture are in such bold relief.

Sānumatī: (From her concealed place) What a marvellous execution of a painting by the King! I feel as if my companion (Śakuntalā) were by my side.

King: A picture drawn perfects even objects somewhat defective in reality;
But her form drawn here has done only feeble justice to her loveliness in life.

Sānumatī: (To herself) This sentiment of his is just in conformity with his deeply penitent mood and becoming modest.

Jester: I find three figures of women here. All of them beautiful too; who of the three is Śakuntalā?

Sānumatī : He has dull eyes not to have distinguished her from the others by the beauty that is hers alone.

King : Whom dost thou then take for Śakuntalā ?

Jester : I guess her to be the one whose dishevelled tresses have unburdened their flower wreaths, whose locks falling on her forehead are wet with the beads of perspiration on her face, whose hands appear tired out and whose resting form stands next to the mango plant fresh with its sprouts bathed in the water from her hands. The other two must be her companions.

King : Indeed you are very clever. For my present mood is evidenced by the picture.

The picture betrays the sticky touch of my fingers on its sides.

The diffusion of colour here explains the fallen tear-drop from my cheeks.

Oh Caturikā ! this is unfinished. Let me have a bit of diversion. Bring me the brush.

(Kālidāsa : *Śakuntalam* : Act 6)

DANCING

(Enter the dancing-master)

Gaṇadāsa : It is true people pride themselves generally upon the occupation handed down from father to son in their family. But so far as the art of the dance is considered,

which has been my professional pre-occupation, I do not think a bit of exaggeration there can be of its merits.

Because,

Sages have extolled this art as a feast to the eyes of Gods,

This has been described as of two varieties because of the source of all dances, Śiva, bearing on his own body Umā as His half ;

This reflects all human emotions being compounded of the three fundamental qualities in creation as well as the nine prime *rasas* in art,

Therefore it is all kinds of tastes of the public, however varied, receive complete satisfaction from this alone.

(Kālidāsa : *Mālavikāgnimitram* : Act 1)

PACIFICATION

[In the Queen's garden a kind of worship is conducted by the Queen to invoke her husband's constancy towards her. Urvaśī and her companion are also in the garden invisible by their supernatural powers.]

King : What dost thou call this special type of worship, my Queen ?

Queen : (Looks at her maid to give the answer.)

Nīpuṇikā : Sire, this is named " Offerings of prayer by the wife for retaining her husband's affections."

King : (Looking at the Queen) Is that so ?

Sweet one, why dost thou waste thy slender form by these religious rites ?

- Who is he that cannot love thee whom
thou should'st thus propitiate ?
- Urvaśī : (From her place) What great regard
shown worthy of his Queen !
- Citralkhā : It is common with lovers to be appearing
more concerned about their wives when
they have other love-affairs.
- Queen : Sire, I should deem this kindness even as
a sign of the first fruits of my offerings
to thee.
- Jester : Friend, please be quiet. Don't court
trouble by contradicting her.
- Queen (Offering flowers by way of worshipping
her Lord and with folded palms) :
I crave of thee, my lord the King, before
the celestial pair of witnesses, the moon
and his consort Rohiṇī, to make this
avowal : " Whomsoever the King likes
or whoever has a liking for the King,
may she be my friend always in
future ! "
- Urvaśī : (From her place) I am at a loss to gauge
the Queen's meaning. Still my heart
seems to derive some consolation of
her trustworthiness.
- Citralkhā : With the good wishes of the Queen, she
being the most devoted of wives, I am
certain your love will bear sure fruit.
- Jester : (Aside) Alas, the Queen resembles a
fisherman who philosophises after allow-
ing a baited fish to slip into the water.

(Aloud) Is he so much your concern, O Queen?

Queen: Let me at least try to retain my husband's love by sacrificing my joys. Make, therefore, your own inferences whether he is my chief concern or not.

King: You can give me to any one you like, Or you can enslave me to anybody else, But, fearful one, I am not so callous As you would imagine me to be.

Queen: Be thou whatever, I have completed my rites undertaken. Come, my maids. Let us away.

(Kālidāsa : *Vikramorvaṣīyam* : Act 3)

SUCCOUR

[Enter Sitā alone after her abandonment by Lakṣmaṇa in the forest. Vālmīki also enters.]

Sitā: (Drawing her veil) Help! Is it a stranger whose steps I hear! Else could it be Lakṣmaṇa himself! Alas, I know not how to help myself. (after a bit of silence, aloud) Ha! who is there? I am a woman and unprotected.

Vālmīki: I shall not move an inch further, daughter; have no fear of a stranger in me. Having been informed of your presence here by the young ascetics of the forest, I have approached you to render what help I can. Will it be proper if I crave of you an answer for a simple question of mine?

While Rāmacandra with his might based on

- righteousness has won many battles and rules this earth,
Tell me, Oh! tell me, daughter, what misfortune may be yours?
- Sitā : That is why the bolt from the moon has fallen and crushed me.
- Vālmiki : Do you say then this punishment has been meted out to you by Rāmacandra?
- Sitā : Yes.
- Vālmiki : If the king who knows righteous conduct and justice so well should feel you deserve this punishment, it is not for me to intervene. Let me then leave you where you are.
- Sitā : But master, hear me further before you leave.
- Vālmiki : Indeed, I shall.
- Sitā : If you, great sage, cannot help me because Rāghava has abandoned me here, can you not at least save me for the sake of the progeny in my womb of kings like Sagara, Dilīpa, Raghu and Daśaratha?
- Vālmiki : (Returning) You speak of the line of Ikṣvaku. Then let me ask you: Are you, child, the daughter-in-law of Daśaratha?
- Sitā : Yes.
- Vālmiki : Are you then the daughter of Janāka of the Videhas?
- Sitā : Yes.
- Vālmiki : Are you Sitā?
- Sitā : Please do not call me Sitā but the unfortunate creature.

Vālmiki: Alas, my daughter, why have you come down from your palace heights?

Sītā: (Looks down).

Vālmiki: Ha, how is it you seem so ashamed? Or let me understand everything with my vision.
(After contemplation) Daughter!

Thou art abandoned by Rāma from sheer fear of scandal

But not with his heart; we shall not fail you who are blameless.

(Diṅnaga : *Kundamālā* : Act 1)

DISTRESS

(Enter Vatsarāja in the garb of an ascetic, accompanied by his Jester robed in ochre clothes.)

King: (With tears and sighs)

When the houses were all aflame and the entire retinue of the Queen were flying for their lives,

the Queen in the grip of terror and distracted of mind and falling down almost at every step,

cried, 'Ah! husband dear!' and was sorrow-stricken before she became a prey to the flames.

Those flames too have subsided, but not this heart of mine which is still on fire.

Jester: (With mixed feelings of sorrow and anger)
Why doest thou worry all the time about the fire? You have done what is due to the Queen.

- King: Fool art thou,
Even ordinary folk will become ascetics living
upon fruits and roots or lie upon the bare
ground or wear *jaṭa* and barks of trees for
failure to follow the Queen to her death.
But I, despite crushing sorrow, am behaving
unworthily of her in listening to such false
counsels from persons like you.
- Jester: I am enraged by such remarks of yours as that
I am an untrue fellow. Do as you please.
But only liberate me from this life of an
ascetic. I am sick of all this.
- King: Friend, this is not an occasion for your jests.
Tell me how to get out of this wretchedness.
Her name alone lingers on my lips:
The mantras I have to repeat leave me cold.
She is always carved upon my memory;
For the deity I meditate upon never takes
shape before me.
Her words alone ring in my ears;
Not the messages of the sages of the forest.
Though I am to live a hermit's life
She comes after me wherever I roam.

(*Anaṅga Harṣa Mātra Rājā : Tāpasa Vatsarāja : Act 3*)

A WORTHY FOEMAN

[Chandana Dāsa waiting to be killed by two executioners. His wife and son are near.]

Chandana Dāsa: (To the executioners) Wait, my
friends, let me console my son.

- (Embracing his son) When death is inevitable, I shall die with the satisfaction that I give up my life for a friend.
- Son : Why dost thou offer me this explanation? Do I not know that it is a fundamental part of our family inheritance?
- Executioner : Catch hold of him.
- Wife : (Beating her breast) Help, oh, help!
(Enter Rākṣasa, the Minister of King Nanda.)
- Rākṣasa : Don't quail! Help is at hand.
O executioners, leave Chandana Dāsa alone.
- Chandana Dāsa : Ah! Minister, what is all this?
- Rākṣasa : I am but imitating a little of the immense sacrifice you have performed.
- Chandana Dāsa : You have frustrated all my work.
- Rākṣasa : I fulfilled that which helps my own self-advancement. Please stop your self-condemnation.
(To the executioners) Inform Cāṇakya of cruel resolve, of this.
- Executioners : What are we to report?
- Rākṣasa : Tell him that,
It is only for my sake Chandana Dāsa earned his [Cāṇakya's] undying enmity; a person otherwise worthy of being worshipped by him because of his deeds that have outshone the achievements of the Buddhas and of his fame which has met with no

check in spreading throughout the world till now has lost everything when this humiliation has been visited upon him.

First

Executioner: (To the other executioner) Well, my friend, hold Chandana Dāsa a while and stand under the tree in the grave-yard. I shall run to Cāṇakya and inform him of Rākṣasa's capture.

Second

Executioner: Yes, hasten then.

(Exit executioner with Chandana Dāsa.)

(Cāṇakya entering)

Tell me, where is he?

Who is he that has controlled fire blazing forth from the fringes of his garment?

Who is he that has bound hand and foot the wind that can rush where it lists?

Who is he that has caged the lion whose mane smells of the ichor flowing from mangled elephants?

Who is he that has swam the terrible deep with its fearful sharks and whales?

Executioner: Master, you are the person of invincible brain that has accomplished this thing.

- Cāṇakya : No, don't say so ! It is done by Fate alone, that has blocked the way to progress of the Nanda clan.
- Rākṣasa : What says this cunning one ? Or I wonder if it be, Kauṭilya is a great man !
- For, like the ocean containing many a costly gem is this Kauṭilya possessed of higher traits. Only prejudice has blinded me to his greatness.

(Viśākhadatta : *Mudrā Rākṣasa* : Act 7)

COURAGE

(Garuḍa, the King of birds, sitting on a rock with the body of the hero lying before him.)

Garuḍa : (To himself) All my life since I began having snakes for my food I have not had this strange experience. What a wonder, this creature does not writhe in pain but appears cheerful ! I am intrigued no doubt by the fearlessness of this person. Let me pause awhile before finishing him off ; let me first find out what creature is this.

(Moves away)

Hero : (Finding the King of birds moving away) I have still in my body flesh enough, My blood vessels have not dried up, but pour out still ;

Your appetite too seems not satisfied yet ;

Then whence this sudden suspense in your work, Oh King of birds ?

Garuḍa : (To himself) Ha ! What a wonder ! He seems strong of mind even in this pitiable plight.

(Aloud)

Thy heart's blood was extracted by me with my beak,

But with the courage of thy heart thou hast extorted my admiration.

Hero : With your hunger you cannot be losing time ; may you proceed with eating my flesh !

(Harṣa : *Nāgānandam* : Act 5)

INTROSPECTION

Chamberlain :

I am here, a sheer apology for a sentinel, watching the harem ; for I am burdened with age. But even otherwise anybody installed in this post can behave no better.

Though possessed of good vision, I should not look things full in the face.

Though quite keen of hearing, I should not appear to have heard anything.

Though really strong of limbs, I am always made to lean on the mace (of authority).

I have always to be cautious lest anything be suspected in my conduct in the royal household.

Service has rendered me its bondsman ; what need then to complain of old age in me ?

(Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa : *Veṇīsamihāra* : Act 2)

RAGE

Whoever, in the ranks of the Pāṇḍava hosts, bears
 arms by the sheer strength of his limbs,
 Whoever happens to be grown of age or still in child-
 hood or yet undelivered of any womb belonging to
 the Pāṇcāla line,
 Whoever has witnessed the vile deed (the killing of my
 father),
 Whoaver will try dare me in battle as I rush forth,
 To him shall I, in my blinding fury, prove a veritable
 God of Death, if not Death to Death Himself.

(Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa : *Veṇīśamhāra* : Act 3)

THE STORY OF THE RAMAYANA

[Rāma meeting his twin sons Lava and Kuśa
 without knowing their identity.]

Lava : Sir ! What is this ? Thy face so full of bene-
 diction for mankind is so suddenly trans-
 formed, sorrow-laden with tears even as a
 white lotus bloom bathed in dew.

Kuśa : How can Raghupati remain unaffected by grief
 without his own Sītā ? The world to one
 bereft of one's own dearest will be a wilder-
 ness enough. Such is his love for his Queen ;
 and his grief is unending. Why then this
 question of yours, as if you were not aware
 of the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa* ?

Rāma : (To himself) Indeed, a most impartial opinion !
 (Aloud) Boys, we hear of the *Rāmāyaṇa*
 often and are told that poetry flowed from

Vālmīki's lips and that the glory of the Solar race is sung. Let me hear it from you.

Kuśa: We know the entire *Rāmāyaṇa*. But we can just now recollect for you two verses only from the earlier portion of it.

Rāma: Do sing for me, please.

Kuśa: (Singing):

Sītā was naturally drawn to the great Rāma. His love grew more even as Sītā's looks and qualities increased with his knowledge of her.

Similarly Rāma became dearer to Sītā than her own life.

Indeed their hearts alone can plumb the depths of true love between them.

Rāma: Alas! these words pierce me more to the heart. The many recollections of Sītā have awakened me to a procession of emotions.

My unbearable grief has become alive again.

Lava: Another verse, let me sing, which brings out Rāma's words to Sītā on the Citra-kūṭa, encircled by the Mandākinī River.

(Sings):

This slab of a seat looking as one arranged for you

Has been covered all over with flowers from the over-hanging Kesara branches.

Rāma: (With shame, pleasure, sorrow and love in his feelings)

These boys are innocent to a fault, especially because they are forest-bred.

Ha, Love! Do you remember those delightful incidents?

(Bhavabhūti : *Uttara Rāmacarita*)

WEDDING

Kāmandakī: Dear Mādhava, take her by the hand.

Mādhava: Yes, I shall.

Kāmandakī: Listen to me, both of you.

To woman, her lover, friend, kin, desires, wealth, life—all that she seeks are compounded in one, namely her husband and lord; in the same way is to man also his properly wedded wife;

Thus shall ye both look upon each other!

(Bhavabhūti : *Mālatī Mādhava* : Act 6)

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Even the dumb creatures of earth help one treading virtue's path;

Just as even one's brethren leave one deviating from the right course.

(Murāri : *Anargha Rāghavam* : Act 1)

PARTING

[Enter King Hariścandra and his Queen. A Brahmin youth has purchased the Queen as a slave. The King's son will not leave his mother.]

King's Son: Father, where does mother go?

King: To where your mother has to work as a slave.

King's Son (Addressing the Brahmin youth): Oh,
thou Brahmin youth! Where do you
take my mother?
(He catches at her garment.)

Brahmin

Youth: Away with you, silly slave-born! (He
seizes him and pushes him.)

King's Son: (Looks both at his mother and his father
and his lip trembles.)

(The King and the Queen look at each other.)

King: Oh Brahmin! Children are innocent;
please spare the boy. (Lifts the child
and embraces him.)
(Looking at his son)

What, child! Do you gaze at me, the
heartless father, with lips quivering
in sorrow?

I am even worse than barbarians who
though not tender to children have at
least attachment for their women.

My child! Do not come after me who am
purchased by the Caṇḍāla. Go and
follow thy mother.

Queen: My lord, why dost thou give way to sorrow
and thus spoil the Sage's mission?

(Kṣemīsvana : *Caṇḍakaśīka* : Act 3)

SUNSET

The lotuses with petals half closed look like the
eyelids of sweethearts dropping at the parting
of the lovers;

The lengthening shadows of evening enveloping the
housetops seem chasing the fleeting rays of
the sun.

The sun descends in the west after blessing the
heads of trees with his slanting beams;

The doves' red eyes bespeak their robbing the sun
of his last ruddy glow.

(Śyāmilaka (Bhāṇa): *Pāda-tāḍilakam*)

AGNOSTICISM

(Enter an agnostic and his disciple)

Agnostic: My lad, only books on state-craft are worth
studying; for practical knowledge required
for getting on in life is contained in
them. The Vedas are mere exhortations
by the strong. For,

By our scriptures the merit obtained gets
vouchsafed to the person departing
from this world, though the performer
of the sacrifice, the sacrifice itself and
all such materials as are necessary might
perish in the process.

Then it can as well happen that the forest
trees can bear fruits after being con-
sumed by conflagration. Again,

If the obsequies can satisfy the dead, it can
as well be that after the flame is extin-
guished still the oil of the lamp can keep
it burning.

Disciple: Master, if only eating and drinking should
prove the end-all of existence, then

what comfort awaits those who perform acts enjoining upon themselves fasts and privations?

Agnostic : Fools they are for being misled into believing the dogmatic insistence of the Scriptures and easily consoling themselves by such self-deception.

Disciple : Do the text writers not say that this world of mixed blessing should be avoided at all cost ?

Agnostic : Yes, it is indeed good counsel to sheepish followers.

(Kṛṣṇa Miśra : *Prabodha Candrodāyam* : Act 3)

POETRY

If dull-witted persons heed not the indirect language of poets,

If the uninitiated in love do not understand the indirect glances of maidens,

It means then that connoisseurs of beauty cannot appreciate any artifice in the language of a poet.

If so, the crescent moon's curve too cannot be an adornment on the crown of Lord Śiva.

(Jayadeva : *Prasanna Rāghavam* : Act 1.

Sūtradhāra's words)

SPORTS

Lo! the peacock tries to strike with his sharp beak her plaited hair falling long on her back and appearing like a black cobra lifting its curved tail and expanding its hood.

She also looks back at the peacock with her charming face half turned, with her eyes rolling in confusion, her ear-ornament dangling on her cheek and her nose-drop of pearl touching her shoulder and enhancing its beauty.

(Rāmabhadra Dikṣita : *Śṛṅgāratilaka Bhāṇa*)

SUNRISE

Vaitālika : The moon in the western sky looks dim
like a much-used glass ;
The east has shed her darkness and shines
like the snake stripped of its scales ;
The lotus pools have awakened with lotus
blooms raised like folded palms ;
The humming bees hovering round them
chant welcome songs to the morning's
lord.

Second

Vaitālika : The sun having controlled the powers of
darkness,
And having taken the bride of morn by
the hand,
Has begun his journey round the world in
his chariot
Like one bidden to perform it by the
Creator Himself.

(Guru Rāma Kavi : *Ratneshvara Prasādanam* : Act 5)

THE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

[A mother-in-law complaining to a friend of hers
about her daughter-in-law.]

Friend: Why are you always lamenting thus?
 Give up these wicked thoughts and
 regain normal impulses;
 For no longer have you any ambition than
 to prolong mere existence here.

Mother-
 in-law: What! do you want me to take as food, like
 a slave, whatever she offers me? I have
 long held the sceptre of rule over this
 family. Do you now counsel me to yield
 up my authority and turn a bondswoman?
 No, you will only see what I am able to
 do.

Ere days pass this wretch of a daughter-in-
 law will go out into the street,
 And another more amiable will serve me in
 her stead.

Friend: Well, the new-comer will make the older one
 an angel of virtue!

(Sundara Rāja Acārya: *Snuṣā Vijayam*)

THE DECEIVER DECEIVED

[Kaundinya is a gormandiser. He is seated outside a house on a verandah. Inside, a couple named Grdhranāsa (the husband) and Jimbhālā (the wife), well known for their miserliness, conspire to outwit the unwanted guest.]

Husband: My dear, receive this (handing her some
 victuals). That barrel-bellied fellow is
 seated there on the front verandah,
 singing to himself merrily. I have,

therefore, entered the house unseen by him, through the back door. Finish the preparation of the sweets soon. Let me first taste some of them before he can be allowed in.

Wife: Everything is ready; only raisins and cardamoms are required to flavour it. (Sprinkling them on the preparations) I have done. But the stuff is very hot. When it cools down to agreeable heat you can taste it.

Kauṇḍinya: (Outside) What, ho! I smell the flavour of fine cardamom.

Must be, some sweet is prepared inside by Jimhalā out of jaggery;

When doubts of this kind assail men of delicate palate,

The watering tongue alone is the surest test.

I hear a conversation within between the couple. (Hearing) So, this old jackal of a husband has entered the house by the postern gate. Does he imagine he can thereby deceive Kauṇḍinya of all persons? No; none can deprive me of my share of any good repast, even as god Maheśvara cannot be deprived of his portion of the sacrificial oblations. Let me, therefore, get round to the back yard. (Moving about) Ah! I find a way by the grace of my guiding deity. So I shall go in.

Easy entrance to some places, walls raised against some others
 Thrown out forcibly at others, total abuses showered also by some;
 But those determined to have a feast at others' expense
 Count none as obstacles, however stingy they be.

(He enters)

Wife: Fool that I am to have left open the back door. I'll close it and come in a second. (Goes)

Husband: How long am I to wait thus for the stuff to cool down a bit? Still the steam is rising from the thing.

Wife: (Seeing Kaundinya) Alas! We are deceived!

(Running back to her husband) The shameless rascal is here, having come in by the back door. What are we to do? (Weeps)

(Y. Mahalinga Śāstri : *Kaundinya Prahasanam* : A farce)

VILLAGE CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 9. Around these (temple) plots should be
 395-397. situated the residential buildings; (in this residential quarter) the central street (reserved for conveyances) should have one footpath and the outer street two footpaths; because residential buildings being situated herein the outer streets must have (a sufficient number

of) footpaths for the security (of pedestrians).

535-536. The master being in an appreciative mood and holding a rewarding hand should (on the completion of a building) make to the chief of the architects the present of a girl together with wealth, jewels, grains, land, a house, wards and conveyances.

(*Mānasāra on Architecture and Sculpture* : Edited by Dr. Prasanna Kumar Acharya. Indian Edition)

CITY CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 10 48-52. Having four gates towards the four cardinal points and furnished with *Gopurās* (towers), dotted over with guard-houses, equipped everywhere with barracks, full of merchants and encircled with markets, crowded with people and filled with temples of various denominations, inside and outside such a place is called a city proper (*Kevala*) by those learned in the *Tantra* (Science of architecture).

52-55. That city is called *Pura* which is furnished with orchards and gardens, has dwellings of motley population, frequented by buyers and sellers, agitated by the noise of trading folk, and graced by the assemblage of (temples of) seven gods.

56. The same city with a royal palace inside it is called a *Nagarī*.

- 63-66. That city is called Paṭṭana (citadel), which is situated in proximity to waterways, furnished lengthwise with a rampart, containing dwellings of various castes, is always a conglomeration of merchants and a centre of exchange for goods like jewels, silk cloth, camphor, etc., imported from and exported to other countries.

Chapter II. The square, rectangular, circular (round);
2-4. octagonal, hexagonal, oval (literally circular with two corners,) and so on; these are the various shapes (recommended for storeys) which increase or decrease (from one to twelve in order).

44. *Couches and bedsteads:*

10. It (the children's couch) should be furnished with four legs and at the forepart of a leg there should be a wheel.

68. Iron nails should be driven into the holes of the legs (in order strongly to fit the frame).

70-71. For the bed of the Gods, the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyās and others, swings should be made with four chains by joining them with one another at the top.

(*Mānasāra on Architecture and Sculpture*: Edited by
Dr. Prasanna Kumar Acharya. Indian Edition)

DEED OF GIFT (BY A GRANDSIRE OF KING BHOJA
OF DHARA)

Kingdoms resemble fleeting clouds; enjoyments are but like the glistening dew-drops on the grass; in the journey towards one's salvation, *Dharma* (righteousness) alone follows man like a life's companion....

Fortunes clinging to the revolving wheel of *Samsāra* (worldliness) gather only bitter fruits of repentance in the end, if not recognised as evil and removed in time....

Who can take back what has been given away in charity by one's own forbears if he is good of soul and cares for true fame and rectitude of a high order? For otherwise, the act will appear like offering flowers that have once been used or eating food that has been vomited out....

"Ye shall guard, therefore, this great dam of *Dharma* from being breached—a duty common to all": Thus again and again King Rāmathadra implores of the future kings of this land....

Reflecting upon fortune's fickleness imitating the particle of water on a lotus leaf and the impermanence of human existence and lastly my own words of earnest appeal to you, may you save from falling into ill repute the names of those who have preceded you!

(*Indian Antiquary*: *Kāvya Māla* Series: Inscription I)

SECURITY BOND

In the year of _____ in the month of _____
on _____ day, during the reign of King so and so,
this property is given as security by the following deed:

So and so living in Śrīpaṭṇa in consideration of moneys advanced as loan by so and so, hereby offers as security his own dwelling-house. The said amount with interest is payable back in bright coins in one instalment in the year so and so on _____ day in the month of _____ to the person advancing the loan. If the said amount is not paid on the said date, the property will be forfeited by him permanently, even though he be prepared to pay twice the amount due from him. The persons standing as sureties and the *Dhāraṇika* shall compel the mortgager to give up his rights in the property by a deed of sale conveying all such rights to the other as will be required for full enjoyment of the same.

In this matter five persons including the sureties, *Dhāraṇika* and others should signify their approval by affixing their signatures.

(Gaekwad Series : *Lekhapaddhati*)

RECEIPT FORM

Written in his own handwriting by so and so to his own father living in the village of _____ in the year of _____ in the month of _____ on _____ day.

For money-lending business I have received 500 coins from out of the share due to me (in case of a family partition) from my father, so and so. When I take my share of the partitioned family property, I shall certainly deduct this amount from the share I am entitled to.

Money handed over by so and so.

Writer of the document :

Witnesses to the document :

(Gaekwad Series : *Lekhapaddhati*)

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